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BABYLON 5 TO SPIDER-MAN

SKETCH #20

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Illustrations by Mitch Byrd

HOW TO ...

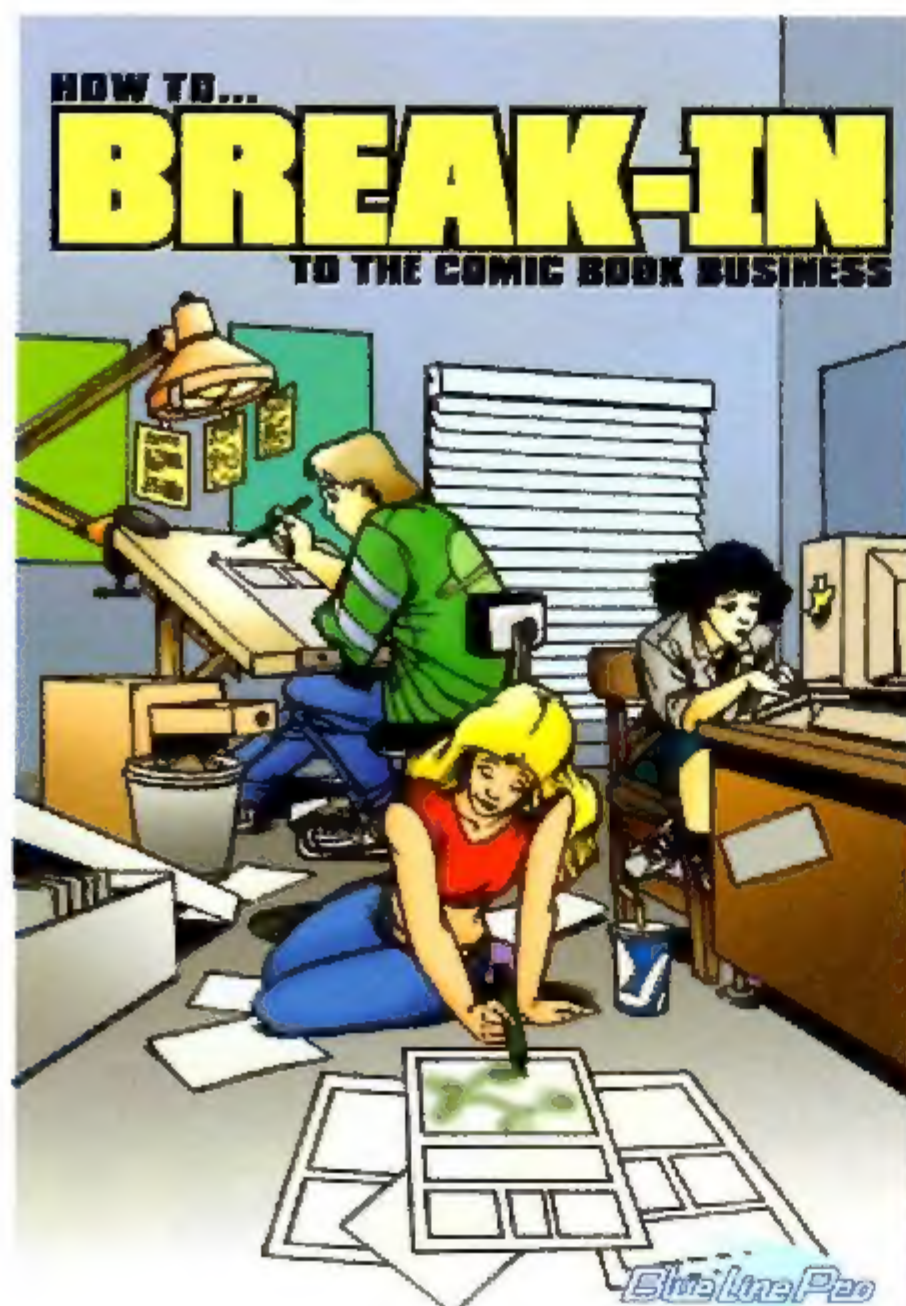
BREAK-IN TO THE COMIC BOOK BUSINESS! 6 issue "How-To" series!

Written by Bill Love, Illustrated by Mitch Byrd, Edited by Bob Hickey.

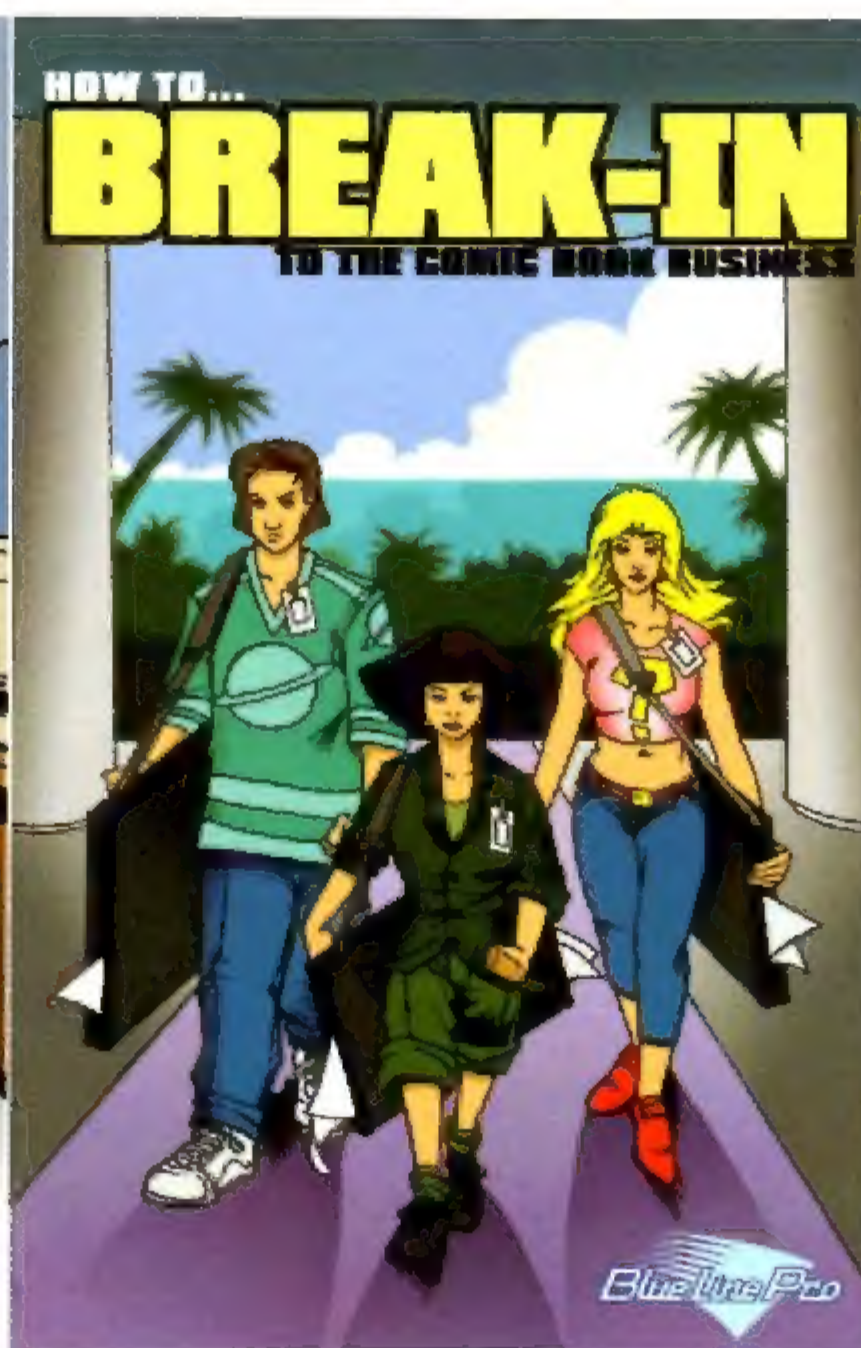
There's a lot more to getting started in the comics business than writing, drawing and coloring! Learn the do's (and many don'ts) of becoming a professional comic book creator. From the first con visit to self-publishing to guiding the adventures of your favorite character, this book will show you the inside info you need in order to stand out from the crowd and realize your dreams. Get practical tips from established pros and struggling newcomers. Follow the story of three aspiring creators as they make their journey from fans to professionals. Whether you plan to be a full-time comic pro or just want to see a glimpse behind the scenes, *How To BREAK-IN to the Comic Book Business!* will both entertain and inform.

HOW TO BREAK-IN TO THE COMIC BOOK BUSINESS!

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At what point do I get a break...?

I ask that question of myself everyday, and I bet some of you ask yourself the same thing.

Over fifteen years ago (hey, I just turned 40, I can't remember exact dates) I printed some comic book pages to draw my own comic book. At that time no one offered pages to artists that wanted to draw on the same boards that the pros used. It hit me that if I wanted to use that same pro-type of art board, other artists may want to use the same quality stuff as well. And Blue Line Pro was created. And believe it or not we still print every single sheet of art board on the same old AB Dick 385 printer that those original pages were printed on. But because of the demand for that printed comic book art board I had to put my projects on hold.

Get a break...

Over the years I have worked with some great talent, but mostly as a writer or inker, not doing the actual illustrating, which is what I wanted to do from the beginning. A few years ago I start to prep a new project called *Race Danger* and even wrote a few articles about it in *Sketch*, but other things (a new baby, a new house) came in the way of getting the projected book off the ground.

Get a break...

Not everything that you begin will end the way you expect.

But for every disappointment here at Blue Line Pro we have a great success story, *Sketch* being one of them. The Bluelinepro.com web site has been great for artists that need and want a variety of art supplies and books.

When do I get a break...

...I answer that question with "everyday."

It may not be the break that I was expecting or wanted at the time, but we have learned to build upon every good fortune and to learn from every misstep that we take.

You will learn from working with other creators, working with printers and publishers, or even the local copy shop. Just take the good and bad and learn from it all and have fun.



Bob Hickey
bobh@bluelinepro.com

...Hey, I finished early! I may just have time to dust off *Race Danger* and do a couple more character designs...



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Greetings, Sketchers!

During these simmering Dog Days of Summer I hope you are producing plenty of great panel work in cool air-conditioned comfort, pumping up your portfolio and preparing to take the comic business by storm, stopping only to pound away at the season's great cons from Philly to San Diego, taking every possible advantage to meet pros, peers, and publicize yourself. And we hope that there are some sweat-stained, well-read, heavily used issues of *Sketch* lying in your wake, now helping guide and propel you forward in your creative pursuits.

Have a question about a new marker? Need some advice about putting that finished page under a hair dryer after you spilled ginger ale all over it upon your final brush stroke? Have an opinion about what we're doing? Everyone does, but we're not hearing from all of you...yet. We're always asking for input, and you might notice a bit of a facelift as we try a few new things. In response to a number of letters (such as Shane's in this month's letters column), we've tried something a bit different this issue and last; new regular Bill "handpicked by Blue Line Bob Hickey" Love's creator overview articles. Though we'll be returning to interviews next issue (with the awesome Mike Oeming) until we see what you think, please compare, contrast, and let us know what you find of the most help/interest to you readers.

We've also stepped up some "Sketch Spotlight On..." columns, offering you some first hand trials of materials to help you make informed decisions on your art tool purchases. Let us know not only what you think of the columns, but what tools/brands you use or prefer, why, and what tools you'd like to see us review before you shell out your bucks.

As we have over the past three years we are always trying to improve the quality of *Sketch*, and give you, our great audience, what you want – so let us know what you think! Or just say "hello". Your feedback is critical. Write to us here at *Sketch*, and don't fail to fill up those Blue Line message boards while you're waiting for that acre of "X" ink to dry

And as always, we invite pros past and present to share your trade tips, insights, and stories – let us know what you're doing, comic art related or not. Drop us a line, we'd love to hear from you.

In the meantime send us your suggestions, keep preparing those submissions, and enjoy your summer. Keep *Sketching*, and we hope to see you again next month.

Flint

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Comic books are a **fun medium!** Blue Line Productions' goals are aimed toward enhancing this art form - and others - through knowledge and quality art supplies. We try hard to make certain that you, the reader, have the comic book technique information you require for your personal enjoyment of this great field.

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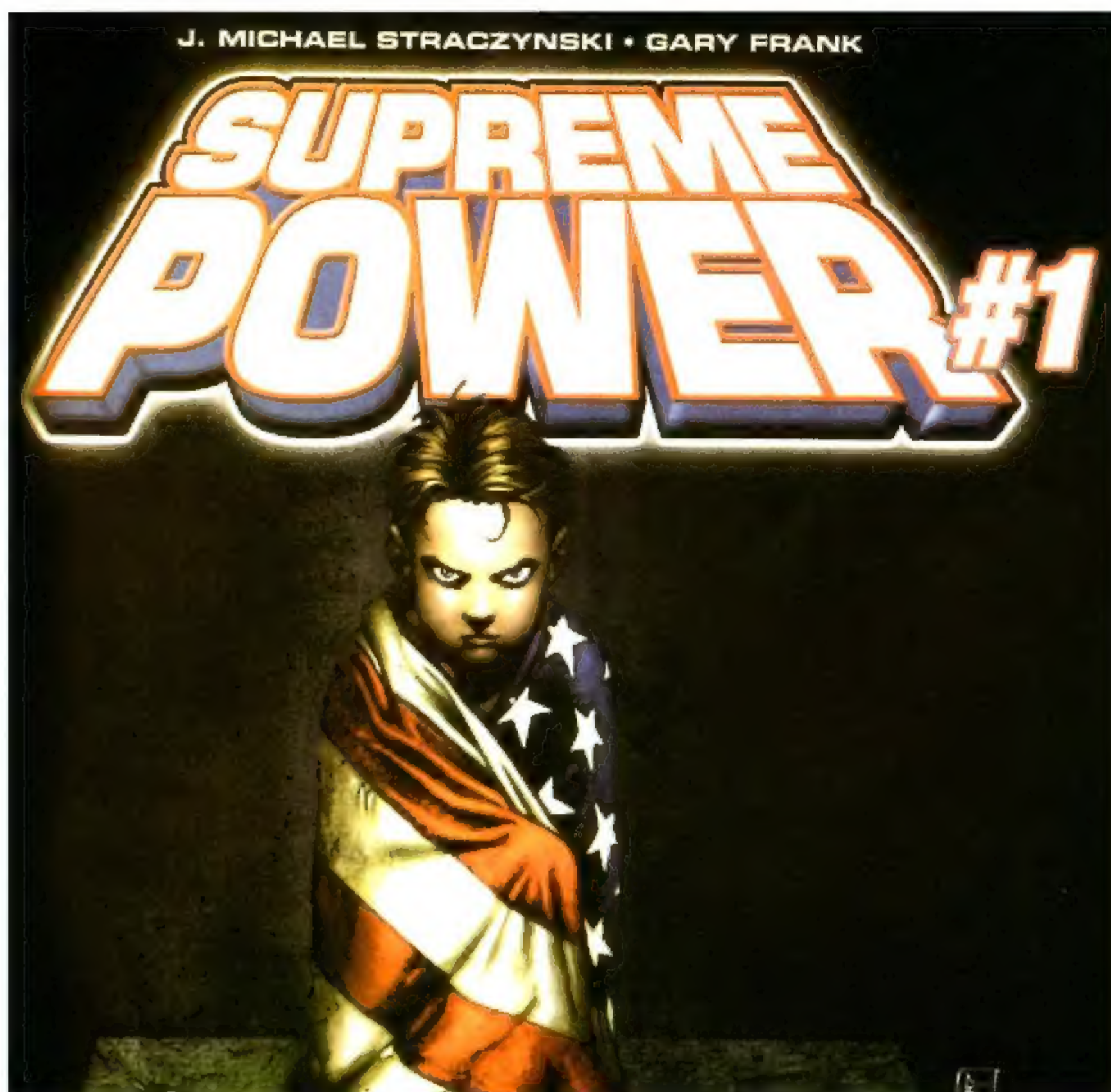
I Just Write

J. Michael Straczynski

on Endings, Beginnings, and Letting the Writing Take You Where It Wants to Go

by Bill Love

For years it was the goal of many comic book writers to make the transition from the four-color page to the much more glamorous world of film and television writing. Now, not only has Hollywood discovered the rich stories waiting to be adapted from comics to the silver screen, but many talented screenwriters have made the leap into the comic book business. Writers such as James Robinson, Jeph Loeb and Kevin Smith have brought their experience, gained in mainstream media, to the world of comics. One of the most gifted wordsmiths to grace both worlds is J. Michael Straczynski, creator-writer-producer of *Babylon 5* and the current scribe recording the life of *The Amazing Spider-Man*. Is Joe (Joe to his friends, which I'm sure includes *Sketch* readers) the latest to join a trend? No, Joe is a writer.



SUPREME POWER by Marvel Comics.

*I'm pleased to note that I've just signed a deal with iBooks/Simon and Schuster to republish all of my prior works of fiction, making them available both online and in major bookstores. This includes my novels *Demon Night*, *OtherSyde*, and *Tribulations*, in addition to a collection of my short stories tentatively entitled *Straczynski Unplugged*, which would include a number of my *Twilight Zone* stories, combined with stories published elsewhere but never previously gathered into a single collection (such as "Say Hello, Mister Quigley," originally published in *Pulphouse*, and "Your Move," originally published in *Amazing Stories*), and a number of brand new, previously unpublished short stories.*

Much of his past work is coming back into print at last, but Joe is very much focused on the future.

*I've turned in an expanded, 35 page outline for a *Doctor Strange**

*limited series to Marvel, and will be writing the script for that one as soon as I can get my head above water. I wanted to bring the Doc into the 21st century and re-visualize certain aspects of his character and his history. It's not intended to be as deep or as potentially controversial as *Supreme Power*. This one's for fun because I'm a longtime fan of *Doc Strange*, and want to do something nifty with the character.*

Mr. Straczynski has done deep and controversial before, but what is *Supreme Power*, and why is it going to make such an impact on the field, as many are speculating?

Supreme Power is an updating of the *Squadron Supreme* book written by Mark Gruenwald. The Squadron was created by Roy Thomas in the pages of *The Avengers*. The members were thinly disguised versions of members of DC Comics' Justice League, done in the light tone of "what would happen if Thor battled Hyperion (Superman)". When

Gruenwald spun them off into their own series, it was in a very different spirit. It was perhaps the first book to really examine the role of the superhero in society. Major changes could happen to these characters and their world, as their actions did not affect the mainstream Marvel Universe. It is considered to have paved the way for such later works as *Watchmen*, *Dark Knight*, *Marvels*, *Kingdom Come*, *The Authority* and others.

Marvel offered the characters to Straczynski and asked him what he would do with them today, without the restriction of the comics code. The result; *Supreme Power*. While it is said to have moments of dark humor, it's planned to be a serious look at the effect power can have on an individual and a society. It's being done for the Marvel Max line — which is aimed at mature readers — allowing imagery and language too intense for the regular line.

Marvel has said it wants me to take this book to the wall, and that's pretty much where I intend to go.

Supreme Power is planned as an ongoing series. It is a difficult task to maintain the level of intensity of a close-ended graphic novel in a continuing series.

*It's a massive writing challenge, though one of my main goals is to do right by Mark's original creation. I'm about to turn in the script for issue 4, and I have to say this is turning into something quite extraordinary. It couldn't be more different from *Spidey*, and to be honest, everything else I've done. The "voice" is completely different, and it's just a freaking dense book, just layers on top of layers of subtext, and I feel like I'm finally using the medium right for maybe the first time, in terms of using the visuals to comment on/counterpoint the dialogue, and vice-versa.*

*As much as I enjoy *Spidey*, and I enjoy it a lot, this is the one that I*

have to tear myself away from when I'm writing, because I get so caught up in it that I can't wait to get back to it again. .

This is a very serious story, one of the most mature things I've written. My scripts have turned into these huge, 50 page (for a 22 page book) Alan Moore-ish tomes that are designed to be visually dense. It's a rethinking of a number of superhero conventions that, so far, has turned out very well, I think.

This is not the only time Straczynski has dealt with a large cast of super-powered characters. *Rising Stars* follows the lives of 113 individuals from the small town of Pederson, Illinois, born after the town is struck by a mass of energy from a non-terrestrial source. The powers link their destinies and affect their world. *Rising Stars* was designed as a limited series in three acts. The conclusion of the story will be coming soon from Top Cow.

Top Cow has already published the



On Writing...

I grew up reading mountains of books, chewing through Bradbury and Matheson and Clarke, as well as mainstream novels, history, philosophy and the literature of other cultures. I love the rhythm and flow and sense of language, the simple elegance of an honestly stated emotion, and the lightning and thunder of argument.

I grew up on books, and radio drama, and reading plays and writing all of the above. Serling, Corwin, Chayefsky, Bradbury, and Ellison tended to be the templates I looked to when I was learning, not how to write, but how to listen. And I'm constantly feeling as though I'm just now, after several books, 500+ articles, short stories, and over 100 produced television scripts...just now learning a little of what it means to write...and how far I have to go.

I've always found "how/when did you get your break into writing" to be a very weird question, at least in my case. It wasn't one thing at one time. This is a career that I've prepared for, and worked toward, and entered incrementally over a very long period.

When I was 16, after having read comprehensively in every genre I could get my hands on, I decided that now was a good time to start. So I began writing. Short stories, poems, playlets, articles, you name it, I wrote it. I didn't show anyone at first, just kept slamming words together in the process of learning how to make little explosions of character and action. When I felt ready — six months later — I began showing it around. The high school I was attending



RISING STAR from Top Cow and Image Comics.

began producing some of my one-acts, and commissioned a full play from me; I began selling articles to local newspapers and magazines; even placed a one-act with a local theater, which decided to produce it before discovering that I was only 17 years old.

After that, it was just a process of writing and sending it out. There is no mystery, no big break, no sudden revelation or secret handshake. Bit by bit, I sold more articles, sold more plays, sold some short stories, and bit by bit, almost without noticing, the list of credits got longer until one day, people started asking me when I knew I'd Made It as a writer, when it hadn't ever occurred to me that I had made it as a writer...I hadn't realized it'd happened.

It's the difference, I suppose, between buying a finished house, and there it is...and watching the house go up brick by brick over a long period of time. At what point did it "become" a house?

This is gonna sound really awful, but...I've never had a problem with the writing. I just write. I don't worry about it. As somebody else once pointed out...on the dance floor, you've got two guys...one guy is running the moves through his head; he's trying to dance. At the other end of the dance floor is Fred Astaire. He's just dancing.

I don't try to write. I just write.

I saw an interview recently with the (relatively) new commandant of the Marine Corps, who said of the Corps' experiments with organization, techniques, and so on, "Experimentation — *true* experimentation — means that you push yourself until you fail." Failure is not only a possibility, it's a requirement, so that you learn where your limits are, so you can address them and try again and next time push yourself beyond the point where you failed the last time.

That, to me, is about a good a description of the job of the writer as I've ever heard.

I don't believe in writer's block. When a person says they have writer's block, what it invariably means, in my experience, is:

first *Rising Stars* spin-off mini-series, written by JMS' associate, Fiona Avery, who also wrote the mini-series *No Honor* for Top Cow. *Rising Stars: Bright* took a look at Matthew Bright and his rookie years as a police officer in the NYPD, with art by Dan Jurgens. The second planned spin-off is due out around August 2003 and features Laurel Darkhaven, the telekinetic who became a CIA assassin. The five issue mini-series is being called *Rising Stars: Untouchable*, and will have artwork by Rick Mays.

Fiona Avery

I'll be looking at Laurel's enlistment as a young, naive recruit and her transformation to a wet-works operative, basically an assassin. Things like when she first lost her killing virginity, her critical assignments, the men in her life, some secrets she uncovers about history and governmental corruption, double agents. She's also framed and blackmailed at one point, keeping her back against the wall at all times due to her inability to trust anyone after some key players misuse her trust - all that stuff, in five issues.

Top Cow also published a twelve issue series by Straczynski and *Supreme Power* collaborator Gary Frank. *Midnight Nation* was a book that defied description and paid no attention to comic book conventions. It combined mind blowing original concepts with action and strong characters. Joe pulls off an amazing trick in this story. Halfway through the book he tells both the reader and main character how the story will end, and we are both still surprised when it happens.

In all honesty, in many respects, from a sheer writing perspective, Midnight Nation represents some of the best stuff I've ever done in the form. It's something that I poured a lot of emotion into, a lot of personal feelings and history and beliefs,



MIDNIGHT NATION from Image Comics.

covering life, death, religion, God, how we achieve meaning...all balanced against a cross-country quest by two people, one out to reclaim his soul, the other a woman sent to help him or kill him, depending on how the story ends up. It is also, oddly enough, a love story. It's one of the things I'm proudest of as a writer, and I recommend it to anyone who found the ideas in Babylon 5 of interest. And the art by Gary Frank is just gorgeous, and evocative, and full of emotion.

All of the above projects are either creator-owned or deal with a group of characters that Joe has been given permission to re-create. Many writers are afraid to tackle mainstream characters that come with decades of often-convoluted continuity. Not Joe. No character has a higher profile, or comes with quite as much history as Peter Parker. Still, Mr. Straczynski has managed to please long-time Spidey fans while more than doubling the sales of *Amazing Spider-Man*. Dealing with continuity while providing a fresh take can be daunting, but not impossible.

I was a huge Spidey fan for many years, starting with his first appearance right up through about maybe five years ago. The problem with being strict on continuity is that there's so much that has been done in and around the character, for so many years, that it begins to wall you in dramatically. So my take on this is that you have to be mindful of the major themes and major stories and broad strokes of the character's history. They are there and they work for a reason. But in the small strokes,

you need to have some measure of flexibility. What art is about — and I'm going to call comics art because I've always believed that's what they are — is not regurgitation of facts; it's about interpretation. In his plays, Shakespeare took liberty with stories and histories that preceded him, bending them to the story he wanted to tell. Similarly, in present, you'll often see many of his plays presented in modern dress, or with a female in the lead role of Hamlet; you look at what's there and re-interpret things to

they're just plain tired of writing and need a reason to stop for a while. Instead of admitting they're bushed, which is a perfectly reasonable justification, they're afraid that they won't be able to top or equal their previous work, or there's something else going on in their lives that needs addressing.

I've been writing nonstop since I was 17, day in and day out, 7 days a week. I've never had writer's block. If I ever did get it, I have enough notes on other projects — books, TV shows, movies, plays, whatever — to sustain me for the next 20 years.

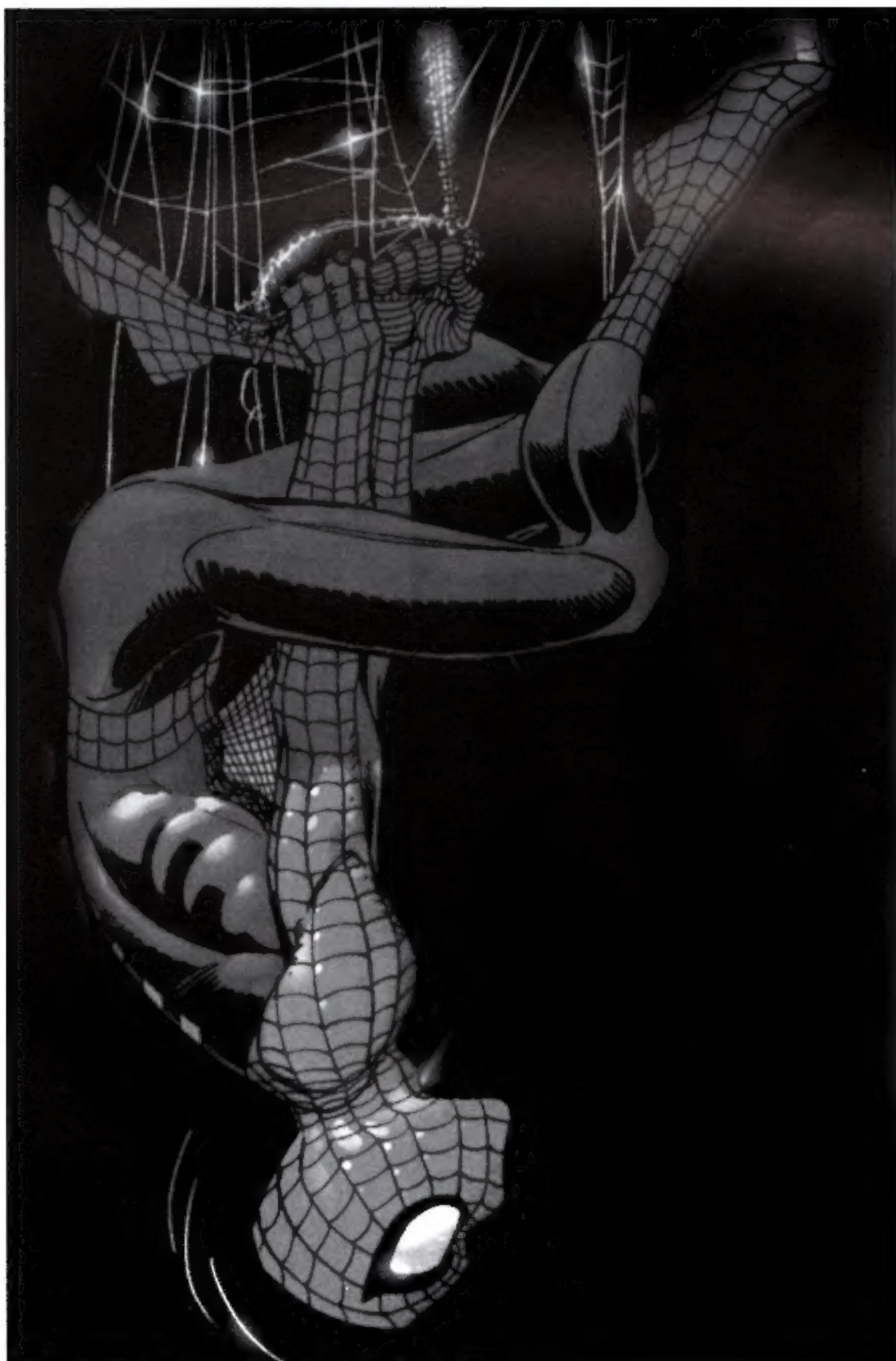
I do believe that writers who feel that they have writer's block need to look at what else in their lives is blocking up the river. The river flows all the time, we just need to get out of the way from time to time or it gets muddled up.

A true writer — as opposed to someone who's only in it for the bucks, or who just want the Pointy Hat that says "I sold something" — can't *not* write. Stories are always unfolding behind your eyes, and the only way to get rid of them is to write them up and send them away.

There is one book I tell anyone who wants to be a writer, to read: Twain's autobiography. It is, quite honestly, probably the best book, best autobiography, ever written. Funny, inspiring, moving, sad, and deeply profound. We think of bios from that time as being dry or irrelevant...*trust* me on this one. It's anything but. I consider it one of the best books I've ever read.

I tend to operate under the theory that unless you feel something while you're writing it's impossible to make the audience feel something upon seeing it. So in the actual course of writing a scene, or a story, I wind myself up to whatever emotions I'm describing...usually by putting myself in a similar place, using past experiences from my own life.

I think it's necessary to burn brightly when you write. I also



SPIDER-MAN from Marvel Comics with artist John Romita Jr.

know it takes a whopping big chunk out of you in return. But I don't know any other way to do it.

Any university or college has vast opportunities for writers and others. In the former case, write for the university newspaper, or the university theater, take classes in acting or film, to get a sense of history, or the hands-on process of being on stage...the range of experience open to you is enormous. Don't just follow your major to its conclusion. There is a world of experience you can get while you're there that you may never have the chance to experience again. Take it.

It's very easy, in this town and in this business, to fall into writing from non-primary experiences. We've grown into a nation where we watch TV as we grow up, and then when we get the chance to write TV, cycle back to things we've seen before...recycling themes and stories rather than using our own primary experiences. I think that film/TV schools are the worst perpetrators of this attitude, teaching how to emulate the past rather than seeking out the present. That's why I chose *not* to get my degrees in TV or Film or Creative Writing. A writer has to be a generalist. Know a little about everything, and able to find out what she/he doesn't know quickly. I've been far better served by a degree in clinical psychology (minor in philosophy) and a second degree in sociology (minor in literature) than I would've been served getting a degree in film production.

Generally speaking, I've been very fortunate in that I've never been "typed" as one kind of writer or another; I've done comedy, horror, science fiction, cop shows, fantasy, mystery, mainstream, originals, adaptations, animation, live action. You name it, I've probably written it. It helps a lot the way the business is going these days to be able to show up wearing whatever color hat is required for the job. It's always



DELICATE CREATURES hard cover with artist Michael Zulli from Image Comics.

see how they look when you turn the mirror just a bit to one side. Otherwise, if you don't have this freedom, you may as well have one of those computer programs where you input the names, histories, and powers of the various Spidey characters, input plot complications, and let it keep regurgitating elements of the same formula, over and over. I think you have to be mindful and respectful of continuity; but a writer's job is to reinterpret the world, and the past, in new and interesting ways. If you ain't doing that, you ain't doing the job.

One of the most memorable comics of recent years is *The Amazing Spider-Man* 36, the issue that addressed the real tragedy of September 11th, 2000, in the context of a universe of superheroes. Simple and poignant, it let us know that there are no easy answers, even in the Marvel Universe.

I got an email from Marvel, who felt that in at least one of their books they needed to really address the

issue of what happened at the World Trade Center. Their feeling was that the one character best suited to this was Spider-Man, because after all, he's a native New Yorker.

So they asked me to write it. Unsure if I had the wherewithal necessary to pull it off without embarrassing myself or trivializing the situation through any inadequacies on my part, I asked for 24 hours to think it over. Figured I'd probably pass, since I just didn't know how I could handle it in a comic book format. Somewhere along the way that night, I found the words...and 24 hours after my email, I sent in the script. I think it says what needs to be said.

In truth I didn't find the words, the words found me. I don't quite know where they came from. It's something that used to happen on B5 from time to time...it's like this door inside my head, and the wider it opens, the truer the words. And the door opened all the way on this one. It literally just tumbled out and onto the page. No

revisions, no second thoughts, just...there. When this sort of thing happens it's as if it has nothing to do with me, I'm just sorta there when the door opens.

Mr. Straczynski donated his writing fee from this issue to the NY Fireman's Emergency Fund.

J. Michael Straczynski has a list of comics writing credits that would make any professional jealous, but his comics work is a minute percentage of his output as a professional writer. And that is what he is, a writer. Joe has been writing since age 17 in a wide variety of genres. Plays, newspaper articles, magazine features, novels, short stories, radio, film and television, both live-action and animation. *Sketch* considered running a complete list of his credits, but we wouldn't have much room for anything else in the magazine. He became a producer to maintain control over his writing and considers comics just another outlet to tell the stories he must tell. He has many stories left, but will perhaps be best known and loved for the "novel for television" known as *Babylon 5*.

I created the concept of Babylon 5 somewhere in between working on Captain Power and Twilight Zone. I'd seen so many SF shows by then that backed into a budget, and thus went forever over budget, that I wanted to challenge myself to develop a show that met several important criteria:

- 1) It would have to be good science fiction.*
- 2) It would have to be good television, and rarely are SF shows both good SF and good TV; they're generally one or the other.*
- 3) It would have to take an adult approach to SF, and attempt to do for television SF what Hill Street Blues did for cop shows.*

4) It would have to be affordable, done on a reasonable budget.

5) It would have to look unlike anything ever seen before on TV, and present not just individual stories, but present those stories against a much broader canvas.

The result was Babylon 5.

*Babylon 5, proclaimed by TV Guide as "the best television series of all time," was a show unlike television had ever seen. Straczynski had an unprecedented level of control over the show. He was the creator, producer, and personally wrote all but a handful of shows over a planned five year run. And why was the show planned to end after five years? Because the story was over; *Babylon 5* had a beginning, middle and end. Characters changed and grew and died as individual story arcs effected an overall story that was planned from the beginning.*

The problem I had going in was that no one had ever done anything quite like this before, and as a



BABYLON 5 television series.

been that way with me...I like writing in a lot of different fields at the same time because it keeps me from going stale. The more work I have, oddly enough, the better I get...I'm at my worst when I have only one thing in front of me, and I fret over it and second-guess it to death.

I kinda multitask. While I'm working on A, my brain is chugging away in the background on B, C, and D. At various points along the way, there'll be this little "ding!" in the back of my head, like a toaster going off, and something will have been worked out with B, C, or D. It pops up, I register it, and if it's something I can retain, I shove it back into my head and keep working on A. If it's a big scene, or something fairly complex, I shrink A, open the file for B, write it in, then go back to A (assuming A is on deadline; otherwise I'll stick with B until C, D or A ding at me). It's all kind of going on simultaneously; I don't look too closely at the process, having fully understood the story of the centipede who asked which foot he moves first...

The longer I take to write a script, invariably the weaker it is. Conversely, the ones written in one pass, in one sitting, in white heat, tend to be my best stuff. The thing about writing fast, for me, is that it forces me to get out of my own way. I don't second-guess myself; I just listen to the characters and write down what they say without questioning it or over-analyzing it. I try to avoid rewriting because I think it leeches life out of a script.

I use the net as a break from writing. When I hit a point where I need to think about the next scene, rather than leave the desk and go watch TV, which will kill an hour or more, I go online, which keeps me at the keyboard. I noodle a bit, during which my brain works out the story problem, and zing; I'm back into the writing again. I may be one of the few who uses writing as a break from writing....



AMAZING SPIDER-MAN from Marvel Comics.

consequence there were no road maps, no guidelines. I was kind of inventing the form as I went along, and I've always been somewhat insecure about my work, as many writers are, and there were times I'd think, "There isn't enough going on, I need more stuff happening here or else it's going to be just the writing and I'm dancing on the edge as it is"...and the threads would get so dense and manifold that there were times when I was afraid I might actually lose control of the thing and the whole thing would tip over and end up in a ditch.

It took me a while to realize that I could relax and trust the writing to take me where it wanted to go. It was only this slowly dawning revelation that let me write things like "Comes the Inquisitor" or "Intersections in Real Time", which is really just two characters in a room. I didn't need a lot of intrigue-ridden threads all over the place to keep things moving, it was okay just to write the scene and the characters and the drama play

itself out.

What happens is that you start laying down threads that, over time, as you watch more and more episodes, tell a much larger story. The more you watch, the more you'll get out of it. If you watch one, you'll be able to enjoy that one strictly on its own terms.

It's a trick I learned while writing/story editing, of all things, *The Real Ghostbusters*. Those were written on two levels; one for younger viewers, one for older. If you didn't get the older stuff, it didn't get in the way of enjoying the show. If you did get the more sophisticated stuff, it added another layer to the experience.

Early in the run of the show Joe was trying to find words to describe the type of storytelling he was trying to bring to TV. He found the words in an unlikely place.

Had an interesting conversation today with one of our crew. I was talking to someone else about the writing philosophy on the show, and

how it's comparable to a triptych...you line up the stories and you begin to see a much broader story after a while. A series of interconnected images.

And this crew person said that I was wrong, that wasn't how the show is being done. Now lemme tell you...we encourage people on every level to speak frankly, at any time, to any one, but it takes considerable *cojones* to say something like that to one's exec producer, that he has his own series wrong in the description. "Oh?" says I.

He explains that what it is, is "holographic storytelling." I asked him what the hell this meant. He said that the image of pictures side by side, linear storytelling wasn't right. That after he read two scripts, he went back and reread the first one, and now he could see things in it that he hadn't seen before. When he'd read three, again he glanced over the first, and new things had come out.

"What it is," he said, "is not side-by-side images, but overlapping images, like old fashioned photographic plates stacked up one on top of the other. Each has a piece of the whole picture. When you line them all up, one behind the other, and look through all of them at once, you realize what the picture is. It's three-dimensional storytelling."

Many fans grew attached to the characters and the story of the last of the Babylon stations, and were truly saddened to see it end. For Joe, the ending of his TV epic could not be described so simply.

Ultimately, for me, the end of B5 is neither a sad ending nor a happy ending; it's not an ending at all, since the universe carries on. But if I were to describe what kind of ending it was, I'd say it was a graceful ending, a dignified ending, an ending that said individuals can effect profound change, if they are willing to put their own lives and happiness on the line; not happy, not sad, but a testament to

the idea that you have used your time here well.

Many fans would welcome a return to the universe that Babylon 5 was set in, and there are tentative plans for a Babylon 5 graphic novel to be published through the DC Comics imprint Wildstorm, but for Joe Straczynski a future return of the TV show is not as important as celebrating the accomplishment of a task many thought impossible.

I was at a convention a while ago and there were all these actors and people campaigning for their shows to come back, from V to Battlestar Galactica to Lost in Space, you name it...and people kept coming up to me and saying, with great gentility and real affection, "I hope you get your show back on again."

And I kept trying to tell them...I ain't here for that. I'm not trying to get it back on. If that were the case I wouldn't have chosen to end it after five years in the first place. I was there to celebrate that we'd done it, not that it should come back or that I wanted people to campaign for it. I set out to tell the story I wanted to tell, and I told it. If something else in the B5 universe comes along, terrific, I'm there...but if not, that's okay too. It's like Zack said in "Sleeping in Light," which was meant as a sorta coda to the production of the show, "everything we set out to do, we did, and nobody can ever take that away."

In 18 years of writing and, later, producing television, I have worked on a dozen series and written well over 200 produced episodes of TV (not counting 8 TV movies). They include such high-visibility shows as the Twilight Zone, Murder She Wrote, Walker, Texas Ranger and others.

But for me, Babylon 5 always stands a head higher than the rest of

them, because of the sheer amount of work, commitment, and time that went into it, and the overall quality that resulted. Sometimes I look back at it all and I'm just astonished that we were actually able to pull off something of that magnitude. Sure, it was uneven in places, often breathtakingly so, but no one in American TV had ever even tried to pull off something on that scale. It had never been done before, so we were inventing the form as we went along.

And the show has persevered. From the time it went on, it has been running continuously, year after year, on one network or another. It's still running in over 120 countries around the world, including the most recent

addition, Japan, where it is rapidly becoming a hit with SF fans there all over again. Every few days there's a new wave of email from people just discovering the show for the first time. I'm unspeakably proud of what we did with that series.

When you think Rod Serling, who did a lot of shows, you think "creator of The Twilight Zone"...when you think Roddenberry, who did a lot of shows, you think "creator of Star Trek." Each was the high-water mark of their career. I've done a lot of shows, but when the game is finally called on account of darkness, the obit will read "...creator of Babylon 5."

And I won't mind a bit.



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Peter Parker (Spider-Man) and Mary Jane from AMAZING SPIDER-MAN from Marvel Comics



Beau Smith From The Ranch How I Busted In The Comic Business In Eight Punches Or Less!

This month's article is dedicated to the guys I broke into comics with:

Chuck Dixon, Tim Truman, Gary Kwapisz, Tom Lyle, Flint Henry, Tim Harkins, John K. Snyder III, Mark Schultz, Tim Bradstreet, Bob Wayne, Lou Bank, KC Carlson, Bob Dvorak, Mark McKenna, Graham Nolan, and Mark Nelson the human weeble.

If I really had to figure how long it took me to bust into the comic book business as a writer I'd have to go all the way back to 1963, the 3rd grade. That's when I first wrote Stan Lee a letter asking him if I could write comic books for Marvel Comics. I sent him the letter written on one of those crummy little note pads that we all used to scribble on, and I also sent him a three page story about me and my buddies savin' the world from crazed, war lovin' aliens. Many years later I would take that same story and turn it into *Parts Unknown*, a series that I did for Image Comics. See.... ya never throw anything away.

Stan really did write me back...or he had Flo [Steinberg] do it. He thanked me for writing, for my "way out" story and for the goofy picture. I was a little taken back by the "goofy picture" remark because I had sent him my 3rd grade school photo. At the time I thought I looked real *Leave It To Beaver*. I guess I still owe Stan a slap upside the head for that remark.

Needless to say, Stan informed me that he couldn't use my story...right now. That I needed to finish school, make good grades, and call him when I got out. Well, when you're in the third grade...that much time seemed like forever. That was my first rejection letter. But...considering it was given to me by Stan Lee...that's a big deal. So I decided to file that offer away and I went on to my regular habits of that particular time.... tormenting all those that did not see life in my particular slant.... meaning I was right and they were always wrong...unless they agreed with me, then they had the honor of being one of my henchmen on the school playground.

I pondered through the rest of grade school, Jr. High,

High School and College from time to time on how I could get into this business that I loved so much. By then I knew that I wasn't going to be the first astronaut to fight aliens in space or lead a group of cowboys on the last cattle drive. So I thought about how to break into comics.

During those times there weren't a bunch of conventions to go to and the internet was just a wet dream in the mind of Bill Gates and Al Gore. We had the letters pages in the back of the comics, and for a young stump jumper from West Virginia...that was about it.

So I started to notice that there were some regular letter writers that wrote to DC Comics and Marvel. Guys like Marv Wolfman, Len Wein, Tony Isabella, Roy Thomas, Gerry Conway, and many more. They were getting' letters printed pretty regular. And in my pin head it looked like the head guys; editors and people that created the comics - were readin' 'em. At that point I figured someone had left the lock off the hen house door, and this young wolf had found a possible way to sneak in.

So...about 1979 I started writing letters to the comic books I was reading. For the first few years I didn't have much luck getting any printed. When I look back on it I'm sure it was because I hand wrote most of the letters. I didn't think that there was someone that had to type or fool with my letter to get it in print. Perish the thought that my letters just sucked. In hindsight I'm sure that was really it.

Well, time passed. I got out of college. Got engaged a couple of different times, quit beatin' on guys that I didn't like, and cut down on my life of crime and beer

soaked blackouts. I finally found a girl that didn't give me my ring back after spending some time with me; I got married and had a kid. I became Ward Cleaver...or Homer Simpson for you younger readers.

About 1983 I started really thinking about getting into comics. All my life I had been blessed or cursed with needing an outlet for my creativity. I'm sure most of you out there have, and feel the same way. It's like being a junkie of sorts. You have to get this stuff out, or other folks just find your manners a little shy of insanity. The job I had wasn't giving me the satisfaction I craved. It was great for those kinda guys that liked regular 9 to 5 security and getting' in the wheel and makin' like a hamster...but it wasn't for me. At that stage I was makin' okay money and was buyin' comics on a regular basis. My mind went back to the letter columns. I thought that I would make another stab at it, only this time I would use the cunning and evil schemes that I applied in my regular job of sales and marketing to that of bustin' into comics.

I started writing letters.... typing...letters to every comic book I would buy. I'd buy 'em, read 'em, and right after that I would sit down and write a letter of comment to the editor and assistant editor. I knew that you had to include the assistant editor because they were the poor donkey that the real editor was beatin' every day and makin' do the grunt work. I tried to make the letters interesting and entertaining. I always made comments on the creative team. There was always a slim chance they would read the letters and remember my name.

Another thing I did was sign the letter by my full name: Stephen Scott Beau Smith. With four names they had to take notice. I proved that because it worked. I also started going to conventions...Chicago Con, Mid-Ohio Con and others. There I would run into editors and creators, and I would introduce myself and they would look surprised and say, "Hey! You're the guy that writes letter with the four names!" Yessir.... That's me.

I would then use my sparkling personality to engage them in conversation and sway them to the side of Beau. It makes Darth Vader's Dark Side look like Sunday School.

They started asking me if they could send me advance copies of some upcoming comics; they'd like to have some letters in the letter column for the first issue. I always said sure....

and got the letters to 'em real fast. All of a sudden I started seeing my letters pop up in comics more and more. That was good. My name was getting known.

By now I had a few editors that knew me and some I would even call friends. I was building relationships. I channeled my contacts into a few comic related fan projects of mine. A local radio show that was based on comics, and later a video show of the same type. That really got me in. Everyone loves to see and hear themselves in the media.

The editors started sending me scripts and plots by their current writers so I could see how the format worked. That was very helpful. The one that really clicked with me was a *Sgt. Rock* script that one of my fellow aspiring writer buddies -
Chuck Dixon -



sent me. It was one by Sgt. Rock creator Robert Kanigher. I found that the format he used was really to my own tastes. It is the format that I still use today.

By this time I had built up a good circle of editors that were really great to me. They helped me with questions and always made me feel like I was their friend and not a pest. They were Murray Boltinoff, Robert Kanigher, Ross Andru, Joe Kubert, Ernie Colon, Bruce Ayres, Sherill Anthony, Jim Shooter, Bob Greenberger, Alan Gold, Gary Groth, and David Scroggy.

There were creators that also helped out, and were real generous with their time and info they would send me. Folks like Don Heck, Walt Simonson, Mike Baron, Sam Glanzman, Terry Austin, Chuck Dixon, Tim Truman, Ron Frenz, John Romita Sr., and a few others.

I knew then that not only was I building a great network of connections, but even better, a great circle of friends that I would always admire and still do.

The first comic book story I ever wrote and sold was to David Scroggy at Pacific Comics. It was owned by Bill and Steve Schanes. I'm sorry to say that it never saw print. It was shortly after that Pacific closed up shop and my story was part of the close up. I still remind David and Bill about it when I see them, but they still don't remember it...another blow to my teflon ego. But they smile and pat me on the head and then run as fast as they can.

It was around that time that I sold my first professional article to *Amazing Heroes*. It was owned and run by Fantagraphics/Gary Groth. Dave Olbrich was my editor on it. It was an article and index on former letter hacks that had turned pro. Something near and dear to my heart. I was also lucky enough to have Don Rosa of *Donald Duck* and *Captain Kentucky* fame to illustrate the article for me.

Gary Groth paid me \$14.00 for the article. I never cashed the check. I still have it.... somewhere in my files. I think that might have messed Gary's accounting up. I think we're seeing the results of that today. To think...I'm to blame.

Soon after that Tim Truman was nice enough to offer me a one-page humor strip in his *Scout* comic for Eclipse called "Beau LaDuke's Tips For Real Men." A character in *Scout* that he and I based on me and my heroes John Wayne, Louis L'Amour and....ME! I had finally made it! I was a published, professional comic book writer.

A little later, Tim let me know that Eclipse was needing a sales and marketing guy. He knew that was what I did in my regular job and he thought I ought to contact Dean Mullaney and cat Yronwode about it. Tim threw in some good words for me, I meet with Dean at the American Booksellers Association thing in Washington D.C. and over the weekend I got things

patched up between Diamond Distribution and Eclipse, lied and cheated my way into the show without a pass, and made some book seller connections for Eclipse. When the weekend was over I had a job. I also think that was the last time I saw Chuck Dixon and Tim Truman in suits at the same time.

Once in on the Eclipse business side it wasn't any time that I had managed to work up more and more writing. *Dogs Of Danger*, *Scout*, *The Black Terror*, *Parts Unknown* (My old 3rd grade story idea), and a few other projects. Truth be told, I used my business connections to get other writing jobs with other publishers as well. Life was good. Since that time in 1986 I have written for every almost every major and minor publisher around. All with very happy memories and current ones.

But there is one debt that still needs to be paid.

Stan Lee still owes me.

I still haven't forgotten his offer for me to work for Marvel Comics. It's a strange irony that to this day, Marvel is the only company that I haven't worked for. My career of writing is closing in on seventeen years, and still I haven't broke into the place that I dreamed about writing for since 1963.

So even though I've been writing comics now for seventeen years, I'm still somewhat in the same boat with you that are trying to bust in for the first time. I still have a dream. I still plan on seeing it come true. I'm not gonna give you one of those peace, love and jelly bean statements like, "Follow your dreams and they will come true."

Nope.

Like me, you've gotta go out there grab your dream by the throat. Squeeze hard until you hear it choke and beg and then you demand your shot. You take it and make everyone sorry that they didn't give it to you long before. You write that story and make your mark like a deep and hard hickey on your jr. High girlfriend's neck.

Let 'em know you were there and have 'em beggin' for more...and get paid for it!

That's how I busted into comics and I'm not through bustin' yet.

Beau Smith.... You know my name!
Your amigo in the trenches,

Beau Smith
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Mitch Byrd's How to Draw



STORYBOARDS

Whenever we watch television or movies we are looking at the end product of a team effort from many people. People turning the written word into moving pictures. A process that begins with the screenplay, and the filmmakers begin to interpret the words to pictures with pre-production drawings and storyboards.

With storyboards the filmmakers are just looking for ideas on how the scenes can look on camera. The emphasis on can, as the visuals will evolve through production with many changes. Changes because ideas are constantly coming to the film makers, and those new ideas are the main reason you don't want to draw the story boards too tightly as intricate complete drawings might put a fog over the creative process when dealing with more than one person. Film making is team work and you don't want to Bogart the process in the storyboards, just get enough **information** in the drawings to give the film makers a starting point. Storyboards are also loose because there **will be thousands** of them in a given production and the filmmakers will need them quickly.

The following is an **example set in the Wild West**. Three gunmen are waiting for the protagonist... Gunmen so mean they don't **have names, just places they were kicked out of**. The storyboards are fairly loose but I have tried to present a **sense of setting, camera movement**, character, and their attitude.

Remember that **storyboards are drawn on paper, not carved in stone**. They will always need to be changed.



Panel 1 – Scene: A cow town in the Wild West. A storm is rolling in.



Panel 2 – Three hombres are waiting next to the general store. Mexican hombre: “Pow! Pow! You Yankees gonna have to settle for left overs.”



Panel 2 – Camera pulls in close. Cajun hombre: “Boy! Don’t call me Yankee.” Swede hombre: “Rain.”



Panel 1 – Camera closer. Cajun hombre: “Young pups always too eager ain’t they.” Swede: “Uh Huh!”



Panel 2 – Cajun: “Too eager, not too steady. Eh, Swede.” Swede: “Yup.” Mexican: “No gringo, I’m steady.”



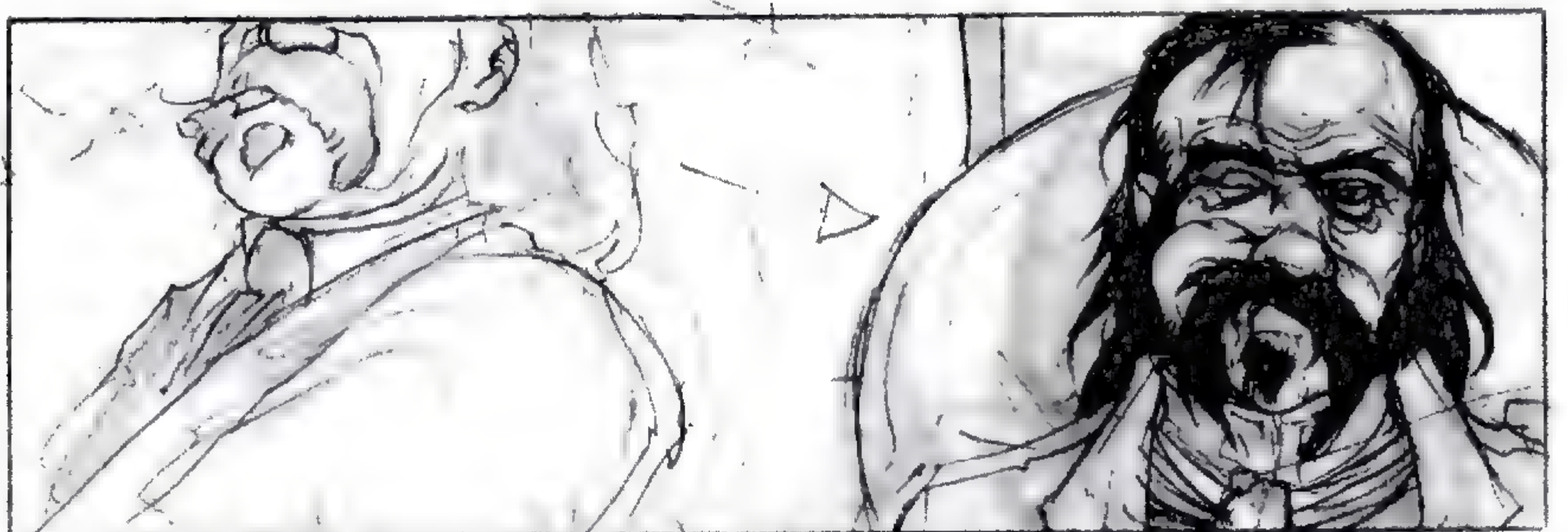
Panel 3 – Cajun cuts a plug of tobacco. Mexican: “Very steady.”



Panel 1 – Swede: “Talk.”



Panel 2 – Camera pans from Swede. Swede: “Talk, talk, talk.”



Panel 3 – To Cajun. Swede: “Too much talk.” Cajun: “Slurp.”



Panel 1 – To Mexican. Mexican: "You know, the ladies like the talk."



Panel 2 – Mexican hombre sees something. Cajun: "We ain't ladies, kid."



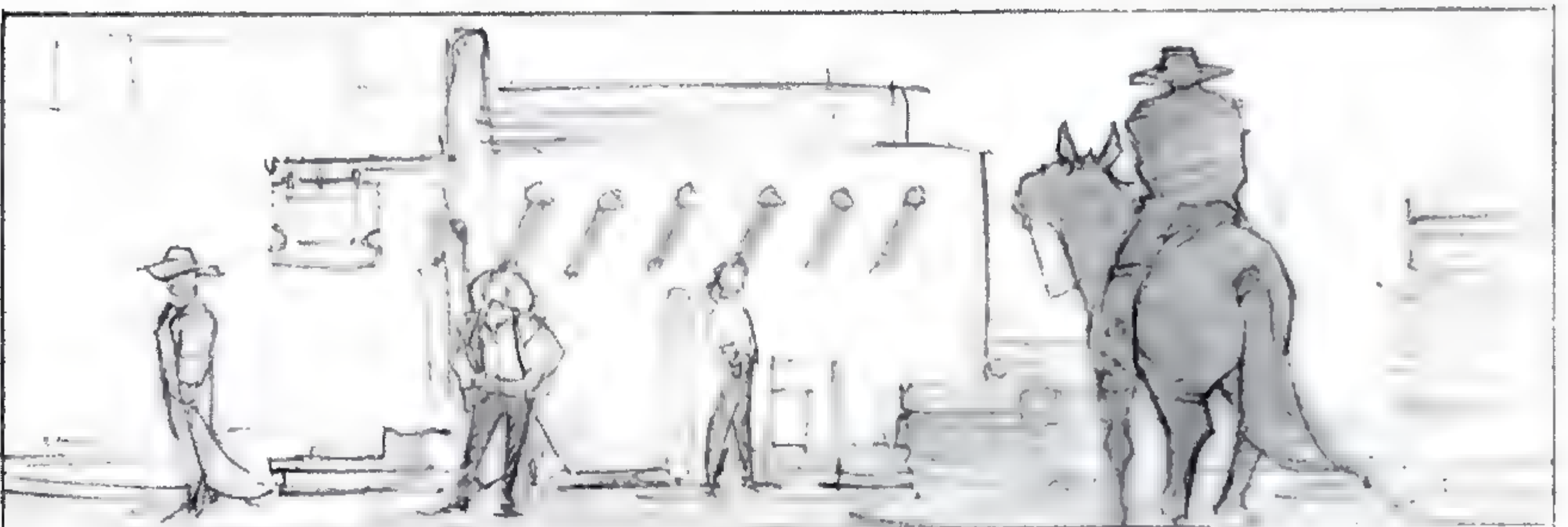
Panel 3 – Mexican: "Got that right, Yankee"



Panel 1 – Cut to a rider silhouette in the rain cloud's shadow. Cajun: "I told ya, boy."



Panel 2 – Cut to the Hombres against the storm clouds. Cajun: "Don't call me Yankee." Mexican: "You betcha, gringo."



Panel 3 – Cut to rider watching the hombres as they separate. Cajun: " Now that is one sorry lookin' horse, mister."



Panel 1 – Cut to rider dismounting as hombres move closer. Rider: “What a stupid thing to say.”



Panel 2 – Cut to rider slapping horse away. Rider: “Am I looking at one idiot or three?”



Panel 3 – Close on Cajun as he spits. Cajun: “Three.”

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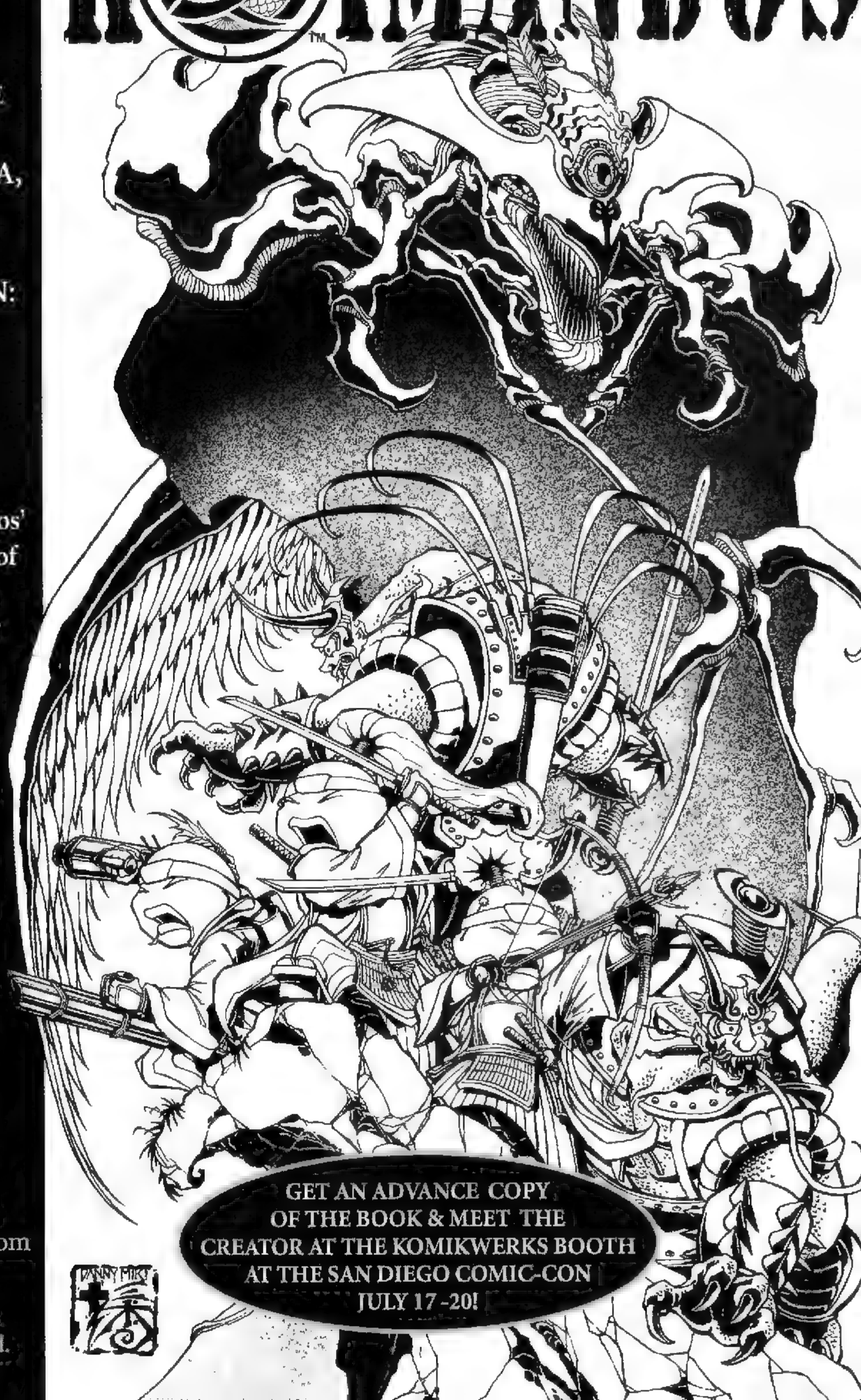
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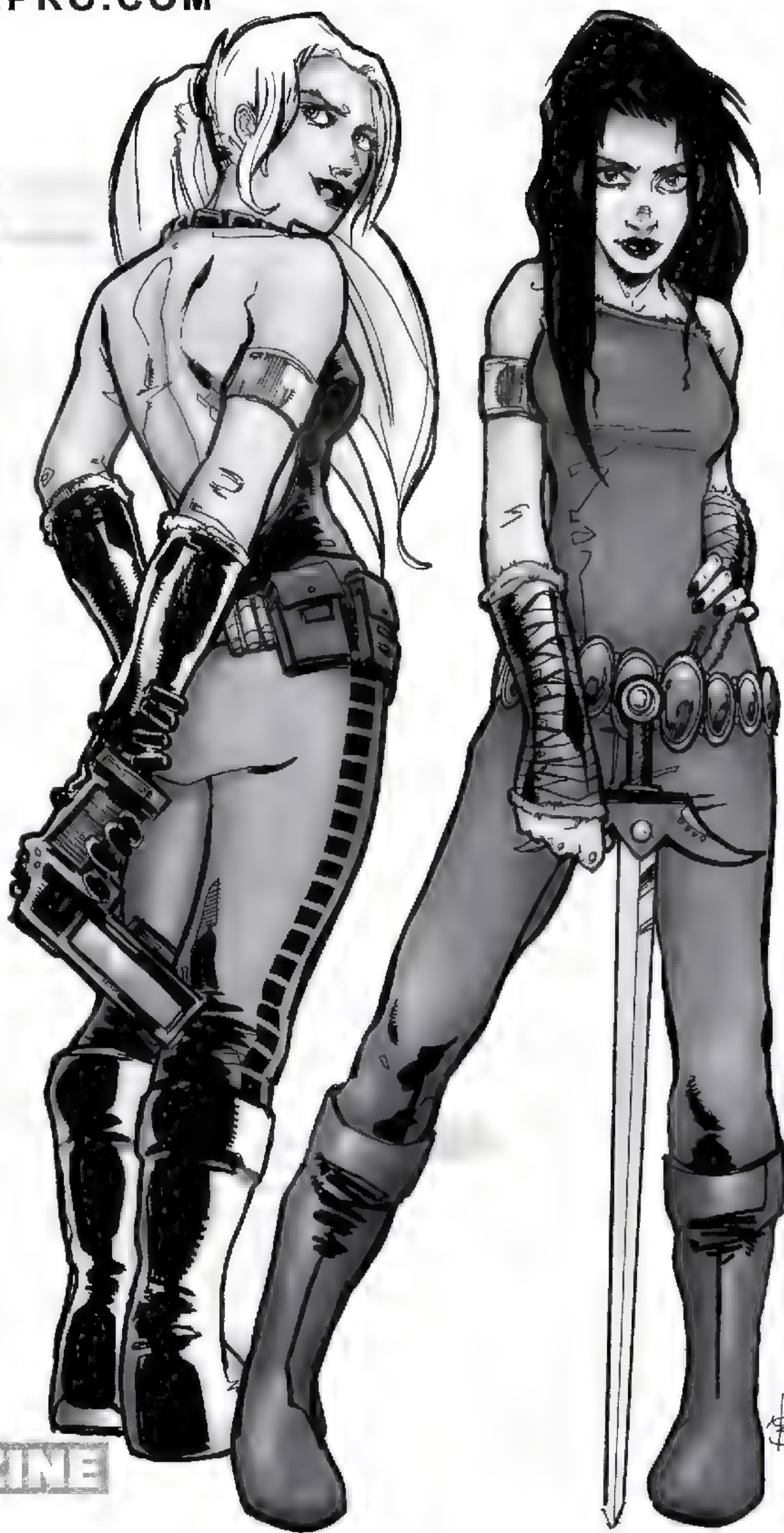
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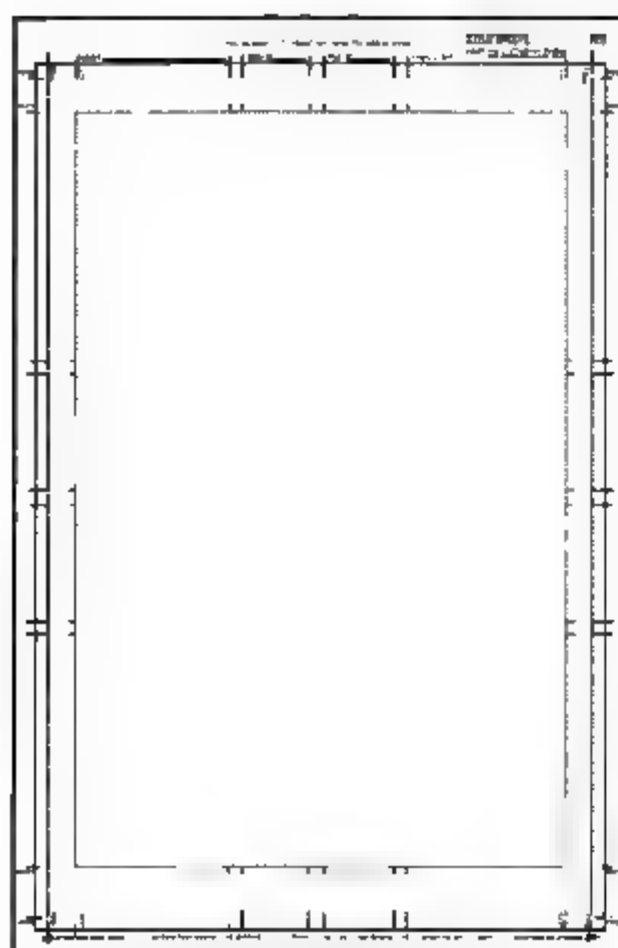
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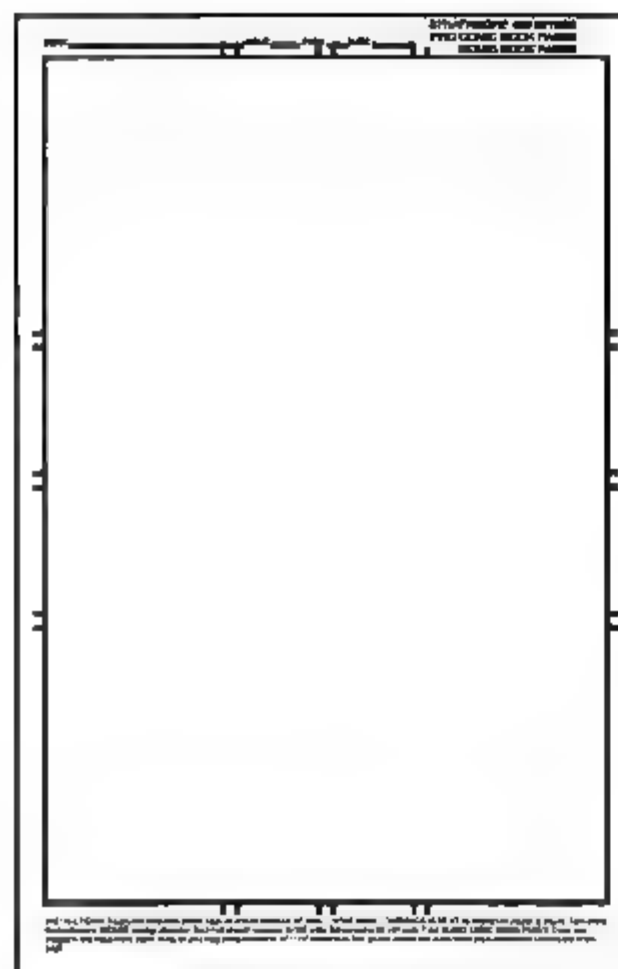
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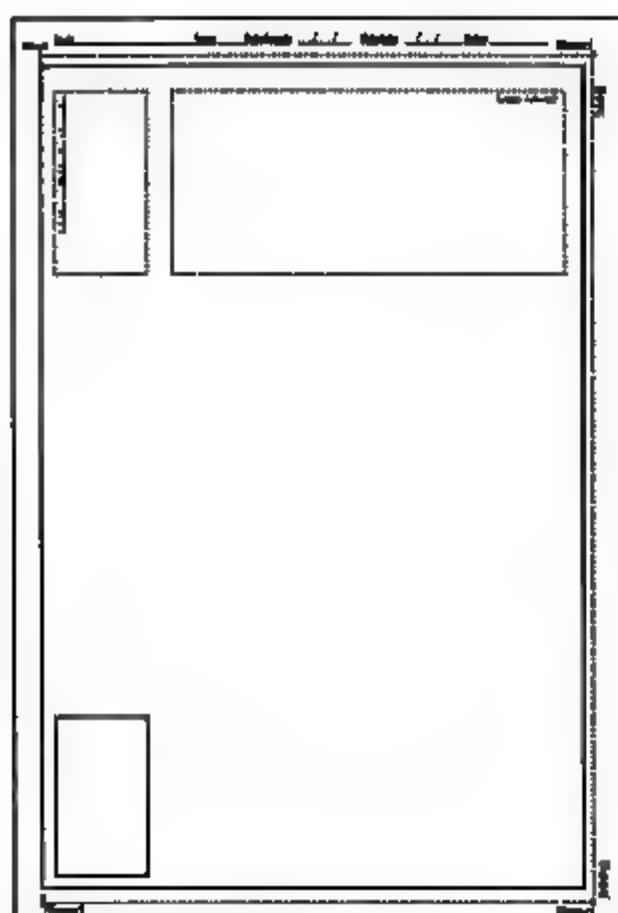
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Use pencil, ink (brush recommended), markers, wash, acrylics.

- ITEM# BL1001 SRP \$15.95

24 pages per pack.

11" x 17" 3-ply white art boards with a 10" x 15" non-photo image printed and 1 Cover Sheet with 10 3/4" x 16" non-photo image printed/ bagged.

COMIC BOOK BOARDS

(Traditional Format)

Comic Book Boards are specifically laid out with an image area for standard comic book designs. These boards like the other comic book boards offer an area to write the name of the book the artist is drawing, issue number, page number and date. This helps to keep track of your boards and where they belong. Double page spreads are a snap for an artist. Just take two comic book boards and then butt the sides together apply tape down the back of those boards and then the artist is ready to illustrate a double-page drawing. Fast and easy with no cutting.

Use pencil, ink (brush), marker, wash.

- ITEM# BL1003 SRP \$12.95

24 pages of Brite Art Index per pack.

11" x 17" pages with a 10" x 15" non-photo image/ bagged

COMIC BOOK COVER SHEETS

These Comic Book Cover Sheets, show a border for your drawing with pre-marked bleeds for trimming with an area for the possible placement for the book's logo and company information clearly marked. This helps to keep a l of the important elements of the covers from being covered up when the book logo and company info are placed later. They are 12 pages of 2-ply premium Brite art index board that come bagged and feature non-photo blue ink.

- ITEM# BL1007 SRP \$8.95

12 pages per pack

11" x 17" art pages printed with a 10 3/4" x 16" non-photo blue border printed/ bagged.

OVER-SIZED

COMICBOOK ART BOARDS

(Traditional Format Borders)

Premiere 300 regular (Strathmore)

Over Sized Comic Book Art Boards 12 per pack textured-surface pages (14 x 22) with Traditional Border. Premiere 300 Strathmore Series regular is a 100lbs paper preprinted with a non-photo blue border that is the trademark of all Blue Line Pro boards. This allows the artist to draw comics the actual size that professionals do. Professionals draw their illustrations larger than they appear in the finished product. This helps minimize mistakes. The main advantage of Strathmore is its 100% acid free feature. This prevents the signs of aging such as yellowing. Premiere 300 Series Comic Book Boards serves as the premiere economic heavyweight paper for the Strathmore series. The regular textured surface offers the artist a chance for textured etchings and is ideal for pencils and charcoal as well as watercolor.

- ITEM# BL1057 SRP \$25.95

12 pages per pack.

14" x 22" with a 12" x 19" non-photo blue border.

Premiere 300 smooth (Strathmore)

Over Sized Comic Book Art Boards 12 per pack smooth surface pages (14 x 22) with Traditional Border. Premiere 300 Strathmore Series Smooth is a 100lbs paper preprinted with a non-photo blue border that is the trademark of all Blue Line Pro boards. This allows the artist to draw comics the actual size that professionals do. Professionals draw their illustrations larger than they appear in the finished product. This helps minimize mistakes. The main advantage of Strathmore is its 100% acid free feature. This prevents the signs of aging such as yellowing. Premiere 300 Series Comic Book Boards serves as the premiere economic heavyweight paper for the Strathmore series.

- ITEM# BL1058 SRP \$25.95

12 pages per pack.

14" x 22" with a 12" x 19" non-photo blue border

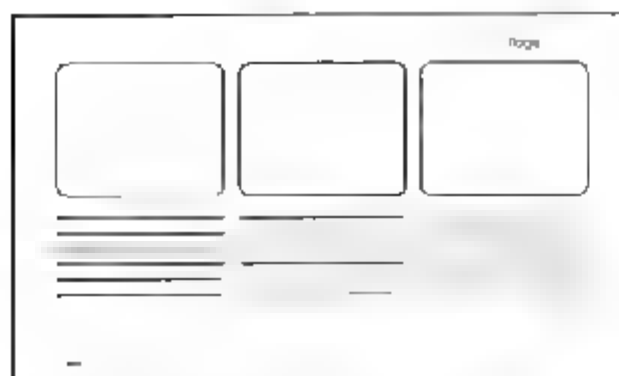


BLUE LINE SAMPLER II

If you haven't tried Blue Line products, here's your chance! The Blue Line Sampler includes 4-Comic Book Pages, 4-Concept Sketch Pages, 3-Comic Book Cover Sheets, 3-Layout Pages, 3-Pro Comic Book Pages, 3-Storyboard Templates, 3-Full Bleed Pro C.B. Pages, 1- Strathmore 300 smooth, 1- Strathmore 300 regular. All in non-photo blue, of course! That's 25 pages of five different Blue Line products! Check out all Blue Line and Blue Line Pro products in one fell swoop!

- ITEM# BL1040 SRP \$13.95

25 pages of 8 different Blue Line products



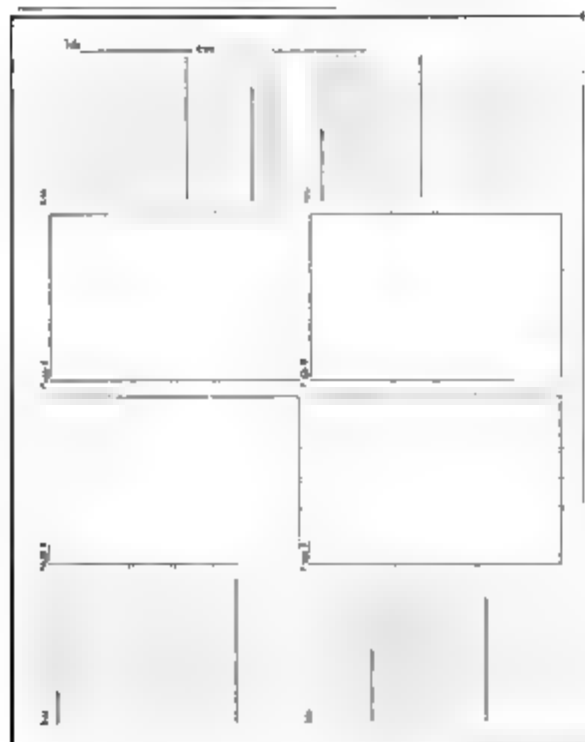
STORYBOARD TEMPLATES

Animators and Storyboard artist! Blue Line Storyboard Templates offers animators and writers a quick and easy way to show movement and sequences of a story or animation.

Storyboard Templates have three large panels with lines below each for detailed art and storytel ing

- ITEM# BL1018 **SRP \$13.95**

100 sheets of 60 lb. 8 1/2 x 14 pages with 3 panels padded with colored cover



LAYOUT PAGES

Comic Book Layout Pages uses premium bond paper and printed in non-photo blue of course, features markings to layout four thumbnails per sheet to detail your comic book page ideas and room for notations and other information

Used for story boarding your comic book story. A great tool for artists or writers to work out details for the story along with layouts of pages.

- ITEM# BL1005 **SRP \$8.95**

30 8 1/2" x 11" pages printed in non-photo blue/ bagged.

POCKET SKETCH PAD

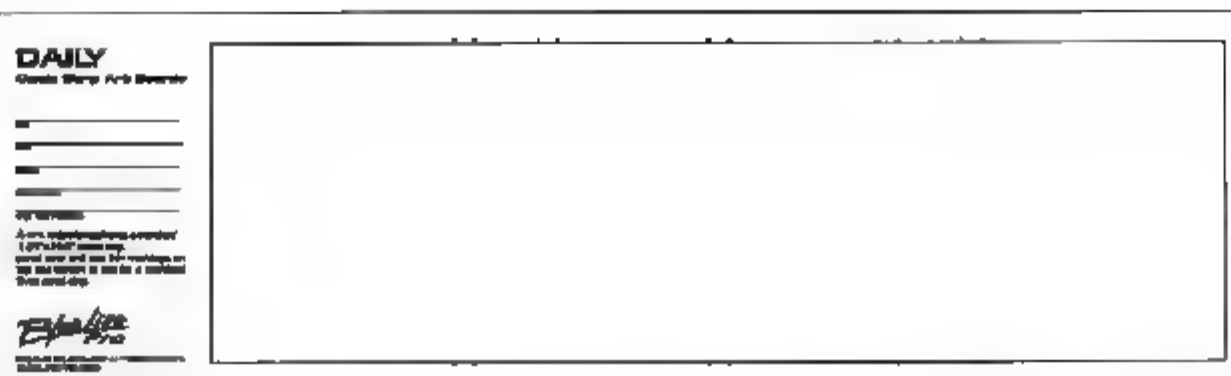


POCKET SKETCH PAD

50 pages of heavy illustration board to carry around in your pocket to have ready when your hit with a revolutionary vision. Great for quick sketches and designs. Featuring Blue Line's quality illustration paper. Great for pencil ing, inking and washes.

50 pages / 5" x 9 1/2" / padded / two-color cover

- Item # BL1051 **SRP \$5.95**

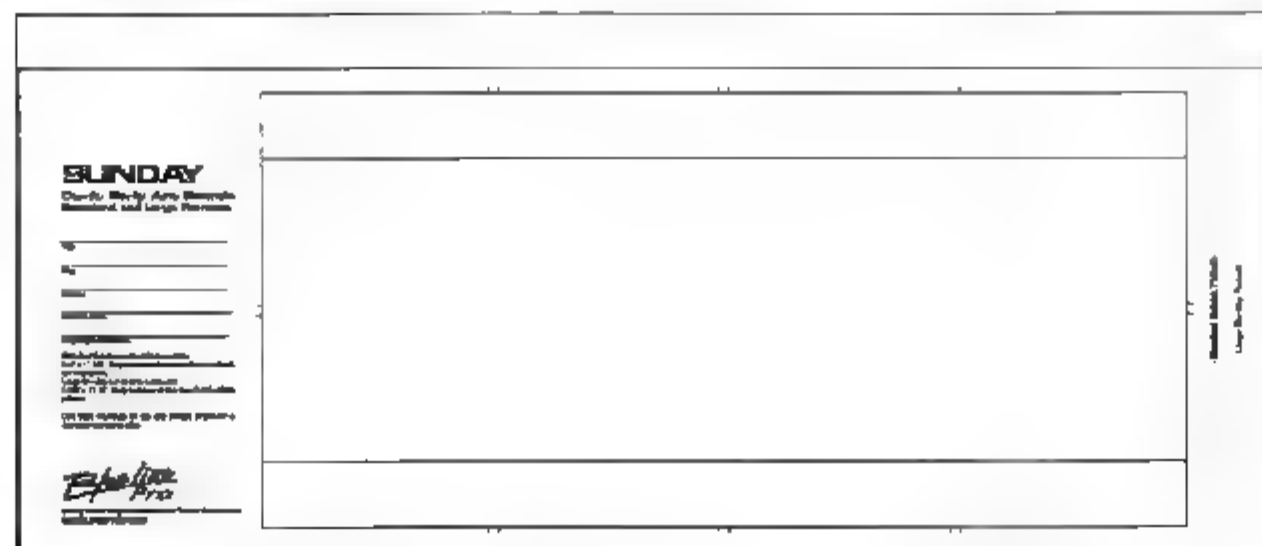


COMIC STRIP ART BOARDS

Blue Line Pro COMIC STRIP ART BOARDS offer comic strip illustrators an easy and time saving way to create professional looking comic strips. Printed on Blue Line Pro's Premiere (Strathmore) 300 series smooth with a non-photo blue border. Daily comic strip borders measure 4 1/16" x 13". This offers the illustrator the ability to reduce the original at a 44% reduction to the standard daily strip size. Sunday comic strip borders have two sizes: the first is a large format of 5 3/8" x 11 1/2" and the second format of 3 3/4" x 11 1/2". The Sunday strips are drawn at the size they are published and usual have two rows of panels. Each strip offers basic border formats for four and three panels and Sundays allow for additional rows.

BLP COMIC STRIP ART BOARDS 12 Daily Comic Strips and 2 Sunday Comic Strips

- ITEM # BL1052 **SRP \$12.95**



CONCEPT SKETCH PAGES



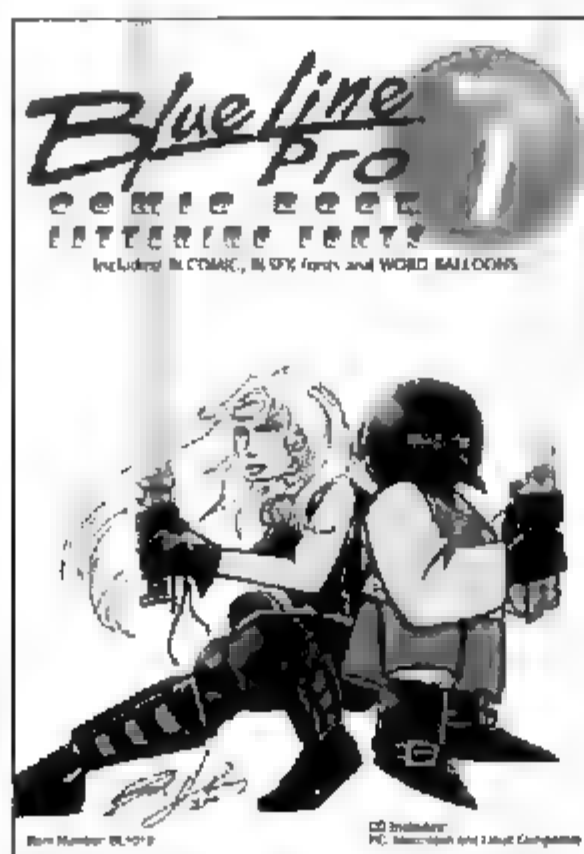
CONCEPT SKETCH PAGES

Record and organize your creative ideas on a convenient, quality art board. Concept Sketch Pages are made from premium index board featuring non-photo blue ink so that the artist can ink his illustrations on a non-repro surface. Concept Sketch Pages offer an image area for an illustrator to draw a character scene or anything. And it also gives room for written information to be included with the artwork. This is handy when a character is designed for a comic book and you want to include his bio, powers, etc., or a Role Playing character you're playing. These pages can easily be hole punched and inserted into a binder. A character template is even included for quick and easy character creations!

- ITEM# BL1004 **SRP \$8.95**

25 art pages printed in non-photo blue/ bagged.

BLUE LINE COMIC BOOK LETTERING FONT



ABCDEF GHIJ KLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890

ABCDEF GHIJ KLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890

ABCDEF GHIJ KLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
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ABCDEF GHIJ KLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890

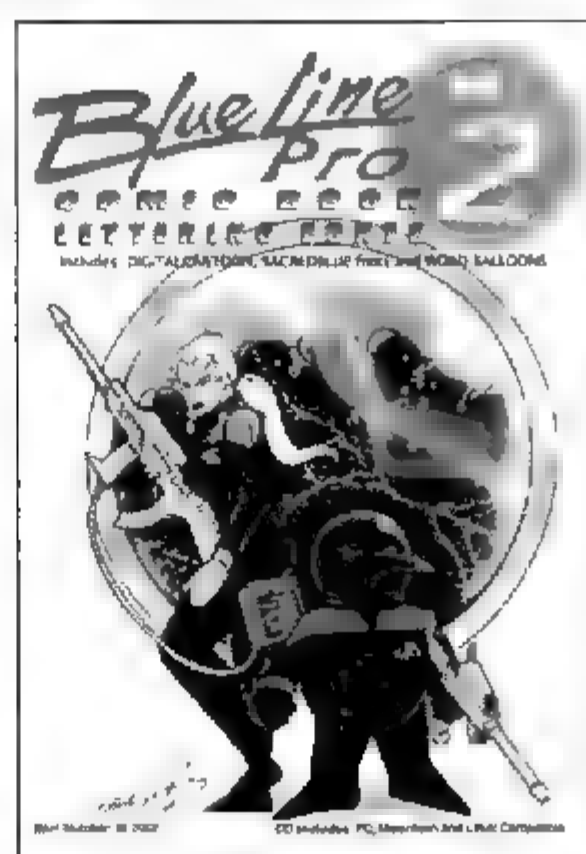
BLCOMIC font is formatted for Macintosh and PC Compatibles in a TruType format. BLSFX is a special effects font with pre-created sound effects that are ready for you to drop into place.

Also included is user configurable word balloons in .eps format.

Blue Line Pro's Comic Book Font Vol. 1

- ITEM# BL1019 - **SRP \$19.95**

FREE Lettering Balloons
with each set!



DIGITALCARTOON-Regular
ABCDEF GHIJ KLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
0123456789!@#%&'()*+,-./:;<=>?[]\^_`{|}~

DIGITALCARTOON-Italic
ABCDEF GHIJ KLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
0123456789!@#%&'()*+,-./:;<=>?[]\^_`{|}~

DIGITALCARTOON-Italic Bold
ABCDEF GHIJ KLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
0123456789!@#%&'()*+,-./:;<=>?[]\^_`{|}~

DIGITALCARTOON-Bold
ABCDEF GHIJ KLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
0123456789!@#%&'()*+,-./:;<=>?[]\^_`{|}~

SACREDBLUE-Regular
ABCDEF GHIJ KLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
0123456789!@#%&'()*+,-./:;<=>?[]\^_`{|}~

SACREDBLUE-Italic
ABCDEF GHIJ KLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
0123456789!@#%&'()*+,-./:;<=>?[]\^_`{|}~

SACREDBLUE-Italic Bold
ABCDEF GHIJ KLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
0123456789!@#%&'()*+,-./:;<=>?[]\^_`{|}~

SACREDBLUE-Bold
ABCDEF GHIJ KLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
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BLDIGITALCARTOON and

BLSACREDBLUE fonts are formatted for

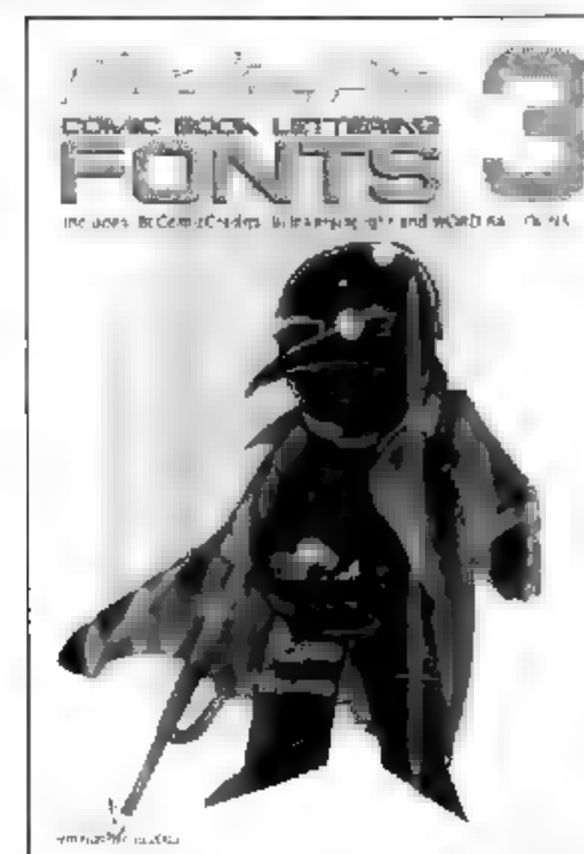
Macintosh and PC Compatibles in a TruType

format. Also included is user configurable

word balloons in .eps format.

Blue Line Pro Comic Book Fonts Vol.2

- ITEM# BL2002 - **SRP \$19.95**



BLCOMICCREDITS-Regular
ABCDEF GHIJ KLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890

BLCOMICCREDITS-Bold
ABCDEF GHIJ KLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890

BLCOMICCREDITS-Italic
ABCDEF GHIJ KLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890

BLCOMICCREDITS-Italic Bold
ABCDEF GHIJ KLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890

BLINKERDELIGHT-Regular
ABCDEF GHIJ KLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890

BLINKERDELIGHT-Bold
ABCDEF GHIJ KLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
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BLINKERDELIGHT-Italic
ABCDEF GHIJ KLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
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BLINKERDELIGHT-Italic Bold
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BLINKERDELIGHT-Bold Italic
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BLINKERDELIGHT-Italic Bold Italic
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BLINKERDELIGHT-Bold Italic Bold
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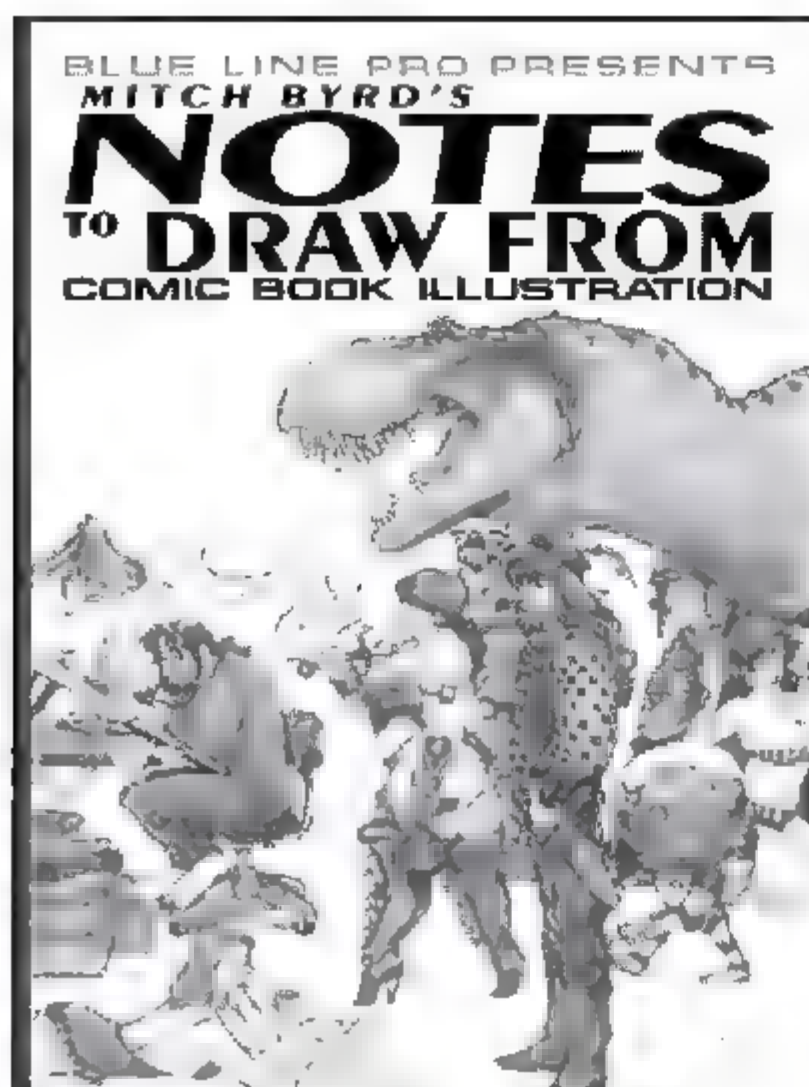
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BLUE LINE PRO'S "HOW TO" BOOK SERIES



NOTES TO DRAW FROM COMIC BOOK ILLUSTRATION

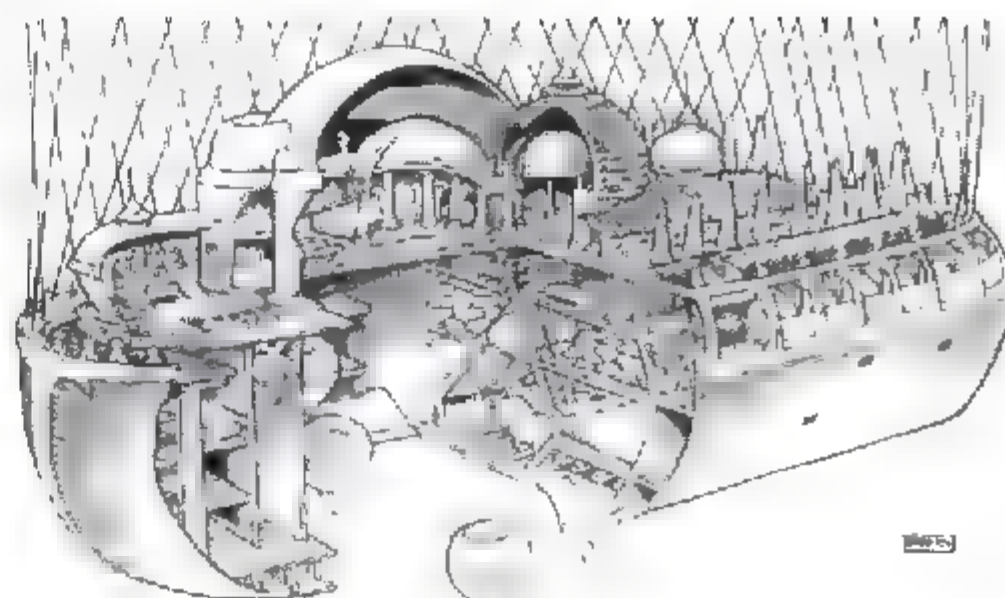
By Mitch Byrd

Mitch Byrd's incredible charming artwork comes to life with this ultimate handbook on illustrating comic concepts. NOTES TO DRAW FROM: COMIC BOOK ILLUSTRATION inspired by Byrd's years of professional work and columns in Sketch Magazine, displays the processes and important ideas central to comics such as page layout/composition, character design, perspective, and much more. All this is achieved with complete and precise narratives complementing step by step visuals that combine to paint a full understanding of comic drawing concepts.

104 pg full color

SRP \$15.95

ITEM# BL3010



Basic

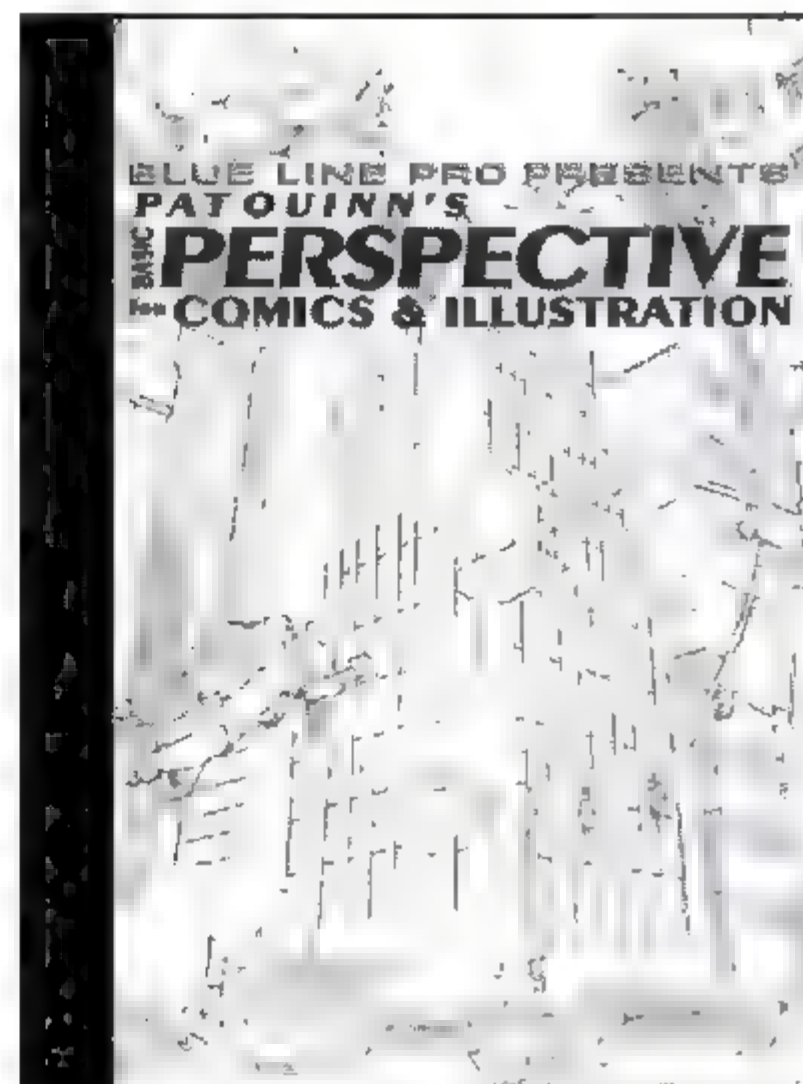
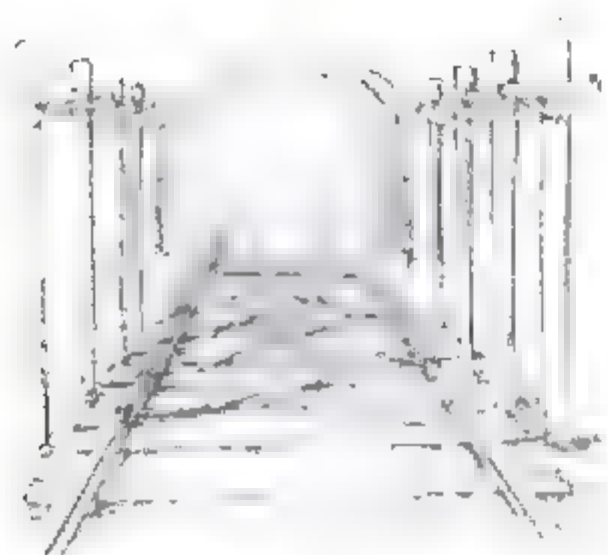
PERSPECTIVE FOR COMICS

By Pat Quinn

The artistic technician Pat Quinn dissects every inch of perspective in comics in the ultimate handbook on creating space on a flat surface, Basic Perspective For Comics. With this handbook, the mystery behind the techniques and principles of perspective will be painstakingly revealed and fully

broken down with step by step visuals. Simple concepts such as vanishing points and horizon lines will be demonstrated as the basic framework for placing anything in perspective as well as creating time honored dynamic storytelling effects. All this is achieved with complete and precise narratives complemented with hundreds of step by step illustrations that combine to construct a full understanding of perspective in comics.

ITEM# BL3020 48 pg. full color / SRP \$12.95



DIGITAL COLORS FOR COMICS

By Aaron Hubrich

Blue Line Pro presents the first in a series of Blue Line Pro "how to" manual books with everything you would ever need to know about digital coloring, and then some. With 48 square-bound full color pages, digital colorist and Sketch columnist Aaron Hubrich walks us through the process of digitally coloring from start to finish, providing extensive commentaries and broken down step by steps. In addition, Aaron shows that there is more than one way to color a cat by demonstrating alternative pathways for the same effects.

Full Color 8x10 48pg.

SRP \$9.95

ITEM# BL3001

DIGITAL COLORS FOR COMICS plus CD.

This special edition includes several extra features on one easy to use CD. Includes ready-to-color high resolution line art that corresponds with the lessons taught in the book, exclusive links to the internet for additional information and updates and much, much more. CD comes sealed on inside back cover. Compatible with PC and Mac.

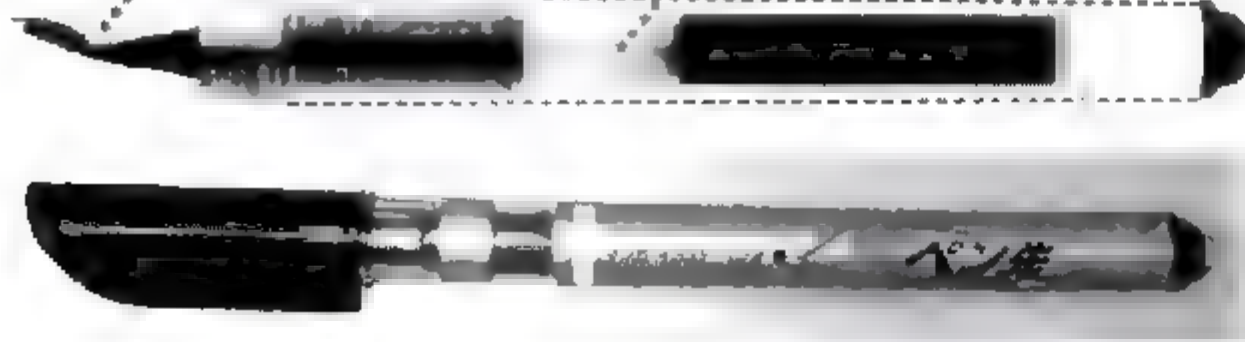
Full Color 8x10 48pg. with CD.

SRP \$15.95

ITEM# BL3001CD

**SMOOTH NIB,
SUPERIOR INK FLOW**

CARTRIDGE FILLING SYSTEM



**TACHIKAWA
NEW MANGA PEN**

All the way from Japan the Manga Fountain Pen from Tachikawa is an incredible new art pen that will revolutionize inking as we know it! The fountain pen quality makes this a precision instrument featuring a chromium-plated stainless steel 0.2mm nib making it impervious to rust or corrosion. In addition the waterproof black ink is fed through a sophisticated cartridge filler system that resists the usual cartridge-based problem of ink flow and skipping (dry start when the pen touches paper). This pen is the superior choice for the discriminating manga or comic artist. The key is in the simple and elegant design.

-ARIC-302834 \$4.95

**TACHIKAWA NEW MANGA PEN
CARTRIDGE REFILLS**

(2-pack)

-ARIC-NC20B \$2.95



SKETCH BOOK SERIES

Blue Line offers two different sizes of Sketch Books. A Regular 8 1/2" x 11" size and the Traditional 11" x 17" size both are filled with 200 pages of 70 lb. art paper. Both have hard covers with library quality stitch binding for durability and makes it easier to draw without an art table.

**SKETCH BOOK
REGULAR (8 1/2" x 11")**

This standard sized hard covered book offers anyone with the ability to pick up a pencil the opportunity to draw. An artist could create their own library of sketches. Great for when you don't want to carry a sketch board around or your just sitting around with your friends.

Also a good way to collect artist signatures and sketches at conventions!
- Item #BL1010 / 200 pg. Hard cover book. **SRP \$24.95**

**SKETCH BOOK
TRADITIONAL (11" x 17")**

This Sketch Book offers the artist the ability to draw the size they're going to draw their original comic book pages.

- Item #BL1011 / 200 pg. Hard cover book. **SRP \$27.95**

PENCILER AND INKER STARTING SET

With everything you need to get starting pencilling and inking, this is a great set to get anyone interested in illustrating comics well on their way. With the combination of the dependable Blue Line Pro pro art boards and quality art supplies and tools, this set is a sure beat to help your dream become reality. Set contains: 24 sheets of pro comic book pages, 1 8-piece multipurpose compass set (which includes a standard compass, a pencil compass, pencil, eraser, 6" ruler, 45/90 triangle, 60/30 triangle, and a protractor), 1 4-piece geometry set (which includes 5" protractor, 1 12" ruler, 1 large 30/60 triangle, and 1 large 45/90 triangle), 1 large kneaded eraser, 3 non-photo blue pencils, 1 brush (size #1), a 1oz bottle of Higgins black ink, and 1 crow quill #102 inking pen. Sealed in 11x17 Travel Box.

**ITEM# BL1055
SRP \$38.95**



CREATE YOUR OWN COMIC BOOK!

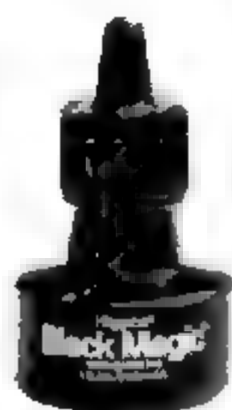
Blue Line has developed a simple and inexpensive step by step to create your very first comic book, that's fun, easy and comprehensive. A box set of Blue Line products that aid a person in making their own comic!

It includes 1 Character Template, 6 Concept Sketch Pages, 6 Comic Book Layout Pages, 24 Comic Book Pages, 1 Comic Book Cover Sheet and a 24 page instructional comic book.

**- ITEM# BL1002
SRP \$21.95**

Box Set 37 art pages / 24 page b&w instructional comic book / full color die cut box / shrink wrapped.





INDIA INK

• Higgins Black India Ink

A non-clogging ink for lettering pens and brushes. Opaque semi-gloss black finish and waterproof.

-AR-4415 Black Ink (Higgins) 1oz. \$3.00

-AR-EF44011 Black Magic Ink (Higgins) 1oz. \$3.50

Higgins Waterproof Black Magic Ink is non-corrosive, free-flowing, and non-clogging. Great for use on tracing vellum and other film surfaces.



• Pelikan Drawing Ink

One of the finest drawing ink available, Pelikan ink is great with technical pens, graphic and fine art papers or tracing cloth.

-AR-PE211862 Black India Ink (Pelikan) 1oz. \$4.75

-AR-PE211169 Black India Ink (Pelikan) 8oz. \$18.75

• KOH-I-NOOR RAPIDOGGRAPH INK

Rapidograph Ink, Black, opaque ink for drafting film, paper, and tracing cloth. For use with Koh-I-Noor Rapidograph Pens.

-AR-3084-FI Koh-I-Noor Ink \$3.95



• WHITE OUT

FW. Acrylic Artist Water-proof White Ink

Great for use with technical pens, brushes, and dip pens.

-AR-FW-011 FW White Acrylic Artist Ink \$5.00



BRUSHES

• Winsor/Newton Series 7

Made with Kolinsky sable with traditional black handle. Great brush.

-AR-5007001 Winsor/Newton Series 7 Size #1 \$18.95

-AR-5007002 Winsor/Newton Series 7 Size #2 \$22.95

-AR-5007003 Winsor/Newton Series 7 Size #3 \$36.75

Round Brushes

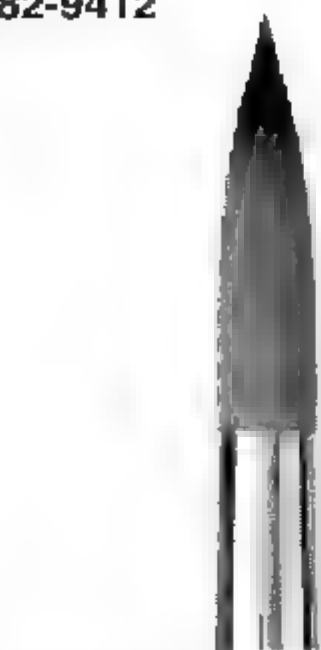
Made with natural Sable with excellent edges and points for precise strokes.

-AR-NB-38-0 Round Brush Size #0 \$3.00

-AR-NB-38-1 Round Brush Size #1 \$3.25

-AR-NB-38-2 Round Brush Size #2 \$3.95

-AR-056009016 Round Brush Size #3 \$3.95



RAPHAEL KOLINSKY FULL RIGGER BRUSH (SERIES 8826)

Kolinsky full bellied rigger brushes are great for line work and lettering.

-AR-SAV25-8826-02 Raphael Size 02 \$17.95

-AR-SAV25-8826-04 Raphael Size 04 \$19.95

-AR-SAV25-8826-06 Raphael Size 06 \$22.95

-AR-SAV25-8826-08 Raphael Size 08 \$35.95

-AR-SAV25-8826-10 Raphael Size 10 \$56.95

RAPHAEL RED SABLE ROUND (SERIES 8424)

Kolinsky red-sable round brushes have a fine point and full belly that are great for long thin lines.

-AR-SAV25-8424-3/0 Size 3/0 \$7.95

-AR-SAV25-8424-2/0 Size 2/0 \$8.50

-AR-SAV25-8424-0 Size 0 \$8.95

-AR-SAV25-8424-01 Size 01 \$9.95

-AR-SAV25-8424-02 Size 02 \$10.95

-AR-SAV25-8424-03 Size 03 \$11.95

-AR-SAV25-8424-04 Size 04 \$15.95

-AR-SAV25-8424-05 Size 05 \$19.95

-AR-SAV25-8424-06 Size 06 \$24.95

-AR-SAV25-8424-07 Size 07 \$27.95

-AR-SAV25-8424-08 Size 08 \$29.95

-AR-SAV25-8424-09 Size 09 \$33.95

-AR-SAV25-8424-10 Size 10 \$44.95

-AR-SAV25-8424-12 Size 12 \$64.95

RAPHAEL PURE KOLINSKY ROUNDS (SERIES 8404)

Pure Kolinsky round brushes are the Raphael's Flagship brushes. With a fine point and full belly, this brush will hold a high paint load. These brushes have an orange tip handle. Recommended by Tom Lynch.

-AR-SAV25-8404-6/0 Size 6/0 \$15.95

-AR-SAV25-8404-5/0 Size 5/0 \$15.95

-AR-SAV25-8404-4/0 Size 4/0 \$15.95

-AR-SAV25-8404-3/0 Size 3/0 \$15.95

-AR-SAV25-8404-2/0 Size 2/0 \$16.95

-AR-SAV25-8404-0 Size 0 \$17.95

-AR-SAV25-8404-01 Size 01 \$20.95

-AR-SAV25-8404-02 Size 02 \$24.95

-AR-SAV25-8404-03 Size 03 \$30.95

-AR-SAV25-8404-04 Size 04 \$37.95

-AR-SAV25-8404-05 Size 05 \$54.95

-AR-SAV25-8404-06 Size 06 \$68.95

RAPHAEL KAERELL ROUNDS (SERIES 8394)

Synthetic Kaerell fine tip water media brushes have a soft, fine natural hair feel, yet are more economically priced.

-AR-SAV25-8394-3/0 Size 3/0 \$5.95

-AR-SAV25-8394-2/0 Size 2/0 \$8.50

-AR-SAV25-8394-0 Size 0 \$6.95

-AR-SAV25-8394-01 Size 01 \$6.95

-AR-SAV25-8394-02 Size 02 \$8.95

-AR-SAV25-8394-03 Size 03 \$7.95

-AR-SAV25-8394-04 Size 04 \$8.50

-AR-SAV25-8394-05 Size 05 \$9.95

-AR-SAV25-8394-06 Size 06 \$9.95

-AR-SAV25-8394-07 Size 07 \$12.95

-AR-SAV25-8394-08 Size 08 \$13.95

-AR-SAV25-8394-10 Size 10 \$14.95

-AR-SAV25-8394-12 Size 12 \$19.95

RAPHAEL PEN HOLDERS

Raphael's universal penholders will hold all nibs. Their contoured, tapered handles are comfortable to hold and elegant to look at. Available in a variety of woods. Synthetic Kaerell fine tip water media brushes have a soft, fine natural hair feel, yet are more economically priced.



-AR-SAV23-3305

Black Lacquer

\$8.95



-AR-SAV23-3300

Natural Wood

\$6.95



-AR-SAV23-3315

Stained Wood

\$5.95



-AR-SAV23-7002BL

Student Pen Holder - Blue

\$3.95

-AR-SAV23-7002GR

Student Pen Holder - Green

\$3.95

-AR-SAV23-7002NA

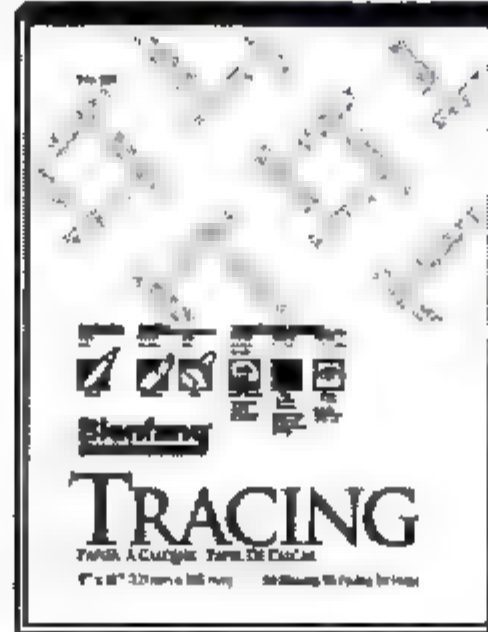
Student Pen Holder - Natural

\$3.95

-AR-SAV23-7002RD

Student Pen Holder - Red

\$3.95



• Tracing Paper

The 504 Tracing Paper has excellent transparency and tooth. It is used for rough sketches and overlays. Fine surface is ideal for pencil, markers and inks.

-AR-HUN-243-123 (9"x12")

50 Sheets \$4.95

-AR-HUN-243-131 (11"x14")

50 Sheets \$6.95

-AR-HUN-243-143 (14"x17")

50 Sheets \$9.95

-AR-HUN0243-163 (19"x24")

50 Sheets \$17.95



PENCILS & QUILL PENS

• Non-Photo Blue Pencil

Makes marks not appear when artwork is reproduced. Very useful.

-AR-761-5 Non-photo Blue Pencil \$6.00



• Quill Inking Pen

Quill Pens offers super-fine flexible point.

-AR-H9432 Quill Inking Pen #102 (Tip & Holder) \$3.25

-AR-H9402 12 Crow Quill #102 Tips (Inking Pen Nibs only) \$13.95



ERASERS

• Kneaded Eraser

Gray soft bendable eraser used for pencil and charcoal.

-AR-1224 Kneaded Rubber Eraser Large \$1.15



• Eraser Pencils

Peel off wrap ideal for detail erasing.

-AR-400 Eraser Pencils \$1.15

• Erasing Shield

Metal shield with different sizes and shapes.

-AR-FT-5370 Erasing Shield \$1.10

PENCIL SHARPNER

Canister Sharpener offers metal blades with high impact plastic container.

-AR-MR906 Canister Sharpener \$3.95



• ALVIN PENSTIX

Graphic waterproof drawing pen offering India Ink density. Black permanent drawing ink.

-AR-4013-EEF 0.3mm \$1.55

-AR-4017-F 0.7mm \$1.55

-AR-4015-EF 0.5mm \$1.55

• Penstix Set

Includes all 3 Penstix Sizes

-AR-4033 .3mm .7mm .5mm

\$4.45



• SAKURA PIGMA BRUSH

Archival performance with flexible brush style nib. Very fine lines or broad strokes. Water/chem. proof + fade resistant.

-AR-XSDK-BR-49 Black \$3.00

• Sakura Pigma Micron

Available in six point sizes

Waterproof, chemical proof and

fade resistant and will not smear or feather when dry.

-AR-XSK005-49 20mm, black \$2.95

-AR-XSK01-49 25mm, black \$2.95

-AR-XSK02-49 30mm, black \$2.95

-AR-XSK03-49 35mm, black \$2.95

-AR-XSK05-49 45mm, black \$2.95

-AR-XSK08-49 50mm, black \$2.95

-AR-30061 3-pk., 25, 35, 45 \$8.00

-AR-30062 All sizes, black \$16.00



ALVIN DRAWING PEN/ MARKERS

• Tech-Liner Super Point Drawing Pen/Markers

Permanent waterproof ink that dries instantly. Nibs set in stainless steel sleeves for protection.

-AR-TL01 0.1mm \$1.95

-AR-TL02 0.2mm \$1.95

-AR-TL03 0.3mm \$1.95

-AR-TL04 0.4mm \$1.95

-AR-TL05 0.5mm \$1.95

Tech-Liner Super Point Drawing Pen/Markers Sets

-AR-TLP5 set of 5 All above \$9.50

-AR-TLP3 set of 3 (1, 3, 5mm) \$5.75



KOH-I-NOOR RAPIDOGGRAPH PENS

Rapidograph Pens are made of impact and chemical-resistant components for drawing and specialty inks. Good balance and self polishing stainless steel points. (Tech Pens)

-AR-3165-05/0 Size 5x0 (13mm) \$27.00

-AR-3165-04/0 Size 4x0 (16mm) \$27.00

-AR-3165-03/0 TSize 3x0 (25mm) \$22.00

-AR-3165-02/0 Size 2x0 (3mm) \$22.00

-AR-3165-01/0 Size #0 (35mm) \$22.00

-AR-3165-01 Size #1 (5mm) \$22.00



MECHANICAL PENCIL

Berol Mechanical Pencil is precision made w/button lead release and light aluminum barrel

- Mechanical Pencil 2mm
- AR-BP10C \$6.95
- 12-Pencil Leads- 2mm. HB
- AR-BP2375-HB \$10.50
- 12-Pencil Leads- 2mm. 2H
- AR-BP2375-2H \$10.50
- 12-Pencil Leads- 2mm. 2B
- AR-SA02263-2B \$10.50
- 12-Non-Photo Blue Leads-2mm.
- AR-BP2376-NPB \$10.50

**Sandpaper Pointer**

Ideal for pointing pencils, leads, charcoal and crayons by hand.

- AR-3435-1 Sandpaper Pointer \$9.95

**Blending Stumps**

Soft paper felt with double pointed ends used for blending charcoal, pastels, etc. Use sandpaper to re-point.

- AR-T811-1 1/4" x 5 1/4" \$5.00
- AR-T812-1 5/16" x 6" \$7.50
- AR-T813-1 13/32" x 6" \$1.00
- AR-T814-1 15/32" x 6" \$1.25
- AR-T817-1 5/8" x 6" \$1.50

**SHARPIE MARKERS**

Permanent markers with high intensity ink. Quick drying.

- AR-SA37101 Ultra-Fine Black \$1.30
- AR-SA35101 Ex-Fine Black \$1.30
- AR-SA30101 Regular Black \$1.30
- AR-SA33101 Super Sharpie \$1.95

Mechanical Pencil Sharpener

Provides professional point for standard leads

- AR-BP14C Pencil Sharpener (Mech Pencil) \$10.75

**WORKABLE FIXATIF (Krylon)**

Provides lasting protection. Prevents smudging, dusting and wrinkling.

- AR-KR1306 \$8.95

METALLIC PENS

Offers high quality metallic ink. Great for autographs.

- AR-SA46115 Gold Pen \$4.50
- AR-SA46120 Silver Pen \$4.50

**CHINA MARKING PENCILS**

Offers moisture resistant, non-toxic odor-free pigments. Self Sharpening. Offered as a dozen or singles.

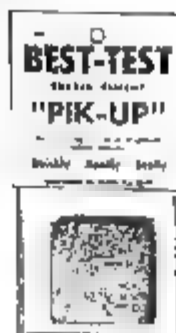
- AR-173T Dozen Black \$10.75

**DRAFTSMAN BRUSH**

Removes shavings from paper. Cleaning without fear of smudging.

Draftsman Brush (cleaning paper)

- AR-FT5391 \$6.00

**RUBBER CEMENT**

Contact adhesive for paste-up and other graphic art uses.

- Rubber Cement 4oz.
- AR-BT138 \$3.50
- Rubber Cement Quart
- AR-BT102 \$13.25
- Rubber Cement Thinner Pint
- AR-BT201 \$8.50
- Rubber Cement Pick-Up (eraser)
- AR-BT700 \$1.50

**Palette Tray**

7" by 5" plastic tray works excellent for holding inks.

- AR-CW161 SRP \$1.95

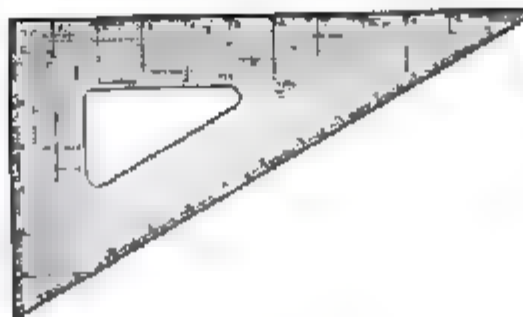
T-SQUARES

• Plastic T-squares offering flexible plastic with both metric and standard measurements

- AR-HX02 Plastic 12" \$3.95
- AR-NBA18 Plastic 18" \$7.95
- AR-NBA24 Plastic 24" \$10.95

• Aluminum T-squares offering hard tempered aluminum blade riveted to a rugged plastic head

- AR-FR63-112 Alum. 12" \$10.95
- AR-FR63-118 Alum. 18" \$12.95
- AR-FR63-124 Alum. 24" \$13.95

**TRIANGLES**

High quality triangles made of 080° acrylic. Raised inking edges. Great for inkers.

- 30" x 60" W/ Inking Edge
- AR-1204-60 Triangle - 30"x60" 4 inch \$3.50
- AR-1206-60 Triangle - 30"x60" 6 inch \$4.50
- AR-1208-60 Triangle - 30"x60" 8 inch \$5.50
- AR-1210-60 Triangle - 30"x60" 10 inch \$6.50
- AR-1212-60 Triangle - 30"x60" 12 inch \$8.50
- AR-1214-60 Triangle - 30"x60" 14 inch \$10.50

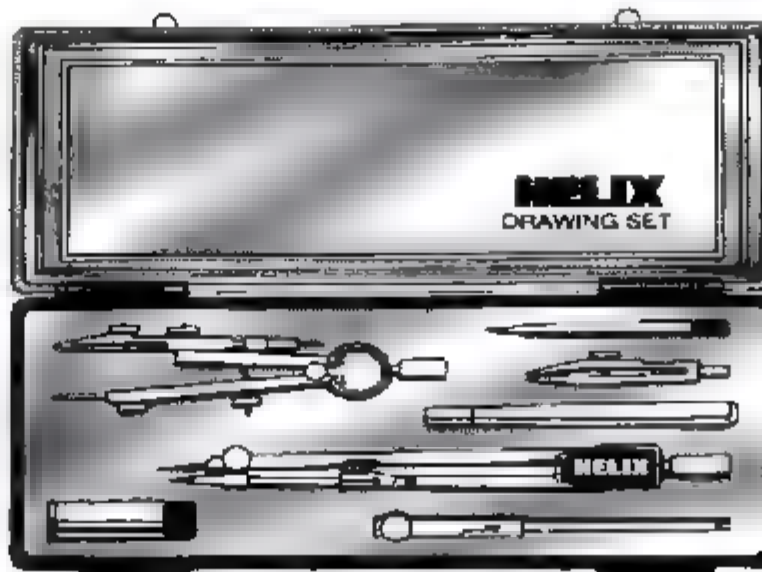
• 45" X 90" W/ Inking Edge

- AR-1204-45 Triangle - 45"x90" 4 inch \$4.50
- AR-1206-45 Triangle - 45"x90" 6 inch \$5.50
- AR-1208-45 Triangle - 45"x90" 8 inch \$7.50
- AR-1210-45 Triangle - 45"x90" 10 inch \$9.50
- AR-1212-45 Triangle - 45"x90" 12 inch \$13.50

COMPASS SET

Geometry set includes ruler compass, two triangles, protractor, eraser, and sharpener.

- 8-piece Geometry Set
- AR-HX18807 \$4.95
- 8-Piece Geometry Set (brass compass)
- AR-723405 \$7.95
- Basic Geometry Set
- 4-piece Geometry Set (Ruler, 12" protractor, 30/60 + 45/90 triangles)
- AR-FL03 \$5.95
- Basic Combination Compass
- 6-piece compass set: side-screw bow compass, knee joint compass, extension bar, spare leads, 2" divider point and a lead pointer.
- AR-S61 Set \$15.95
- Compass Set
- 6-piece drawing set contains: Small side screw compass 5 1/2" self-centering knee joint compass/divider, extension bar, technical pen adapter, divider point and lead pointer

**RULERS**

• Stainless Steel Rulers offering flexible steel with non-skid cork backing.

- AR-200-12 Steel Ruler 12 inch Cork Backing \$5.95
- AR-200-18 Steel Ruler 18 inch Cork Backing \$6.95
- Plastic Ruler 1 inch with 1/16" markings and metric markings.
- AR-C36 Ruler 12" (plastic ruler) \$1.25
- AR-18 Ruler 6" (plastic ruler) \$5.00

**ARHLX01330-01330 Set**

\$16.95

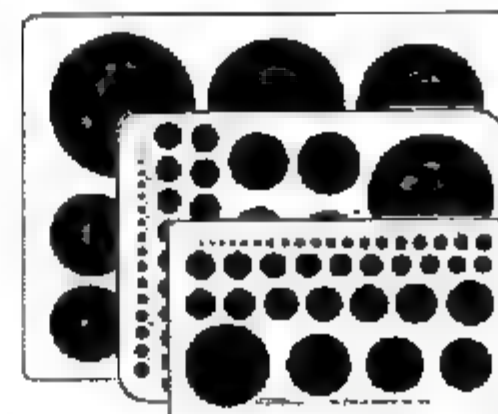
CIRCLE TEMPLATES / FRENCH CURVES / ELLIPSE TEMPLATES

• Circle Templates
Metric and standard. Risers for smear-free drawing (Great for Inkers)

- Large Circles
- AR-13001 \$7.95
- Extra Large Circles
- AR-13011 \$6.95

**French Curves (Inking Edge)**

- AR-9000 Set \$8.95
- Ellipse Temps.
- AR-PK12691 \$12.00

**Circle Templates Set of 3**

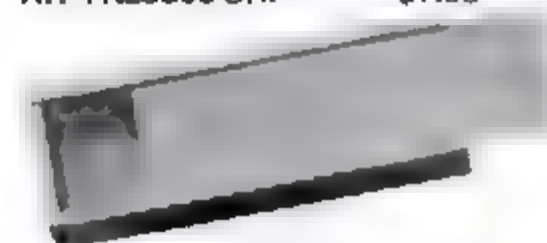
This set of 3 templates provides ninety-eight different circles and edge scales in 50th 16th and 10th as well as mm and centering lines. Sizes ranging from 1/32 inches to 3 1/2 inches.

- ITEM #AR-TD404 SRP \$17.95
- Ellipse Template
- AR-PK12691 \$12.00

Brush Box

This 12" by 4" by 1 1/2" sturdy wooden box protects your valuable brushes and pens.

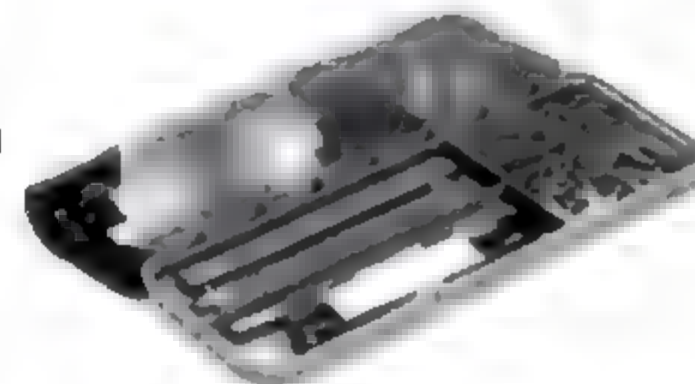
- AR-YK23000 SRP \$7.95

**POCKET PORTFOLIO**

- AR-FL419WH Pocket Portfolio 14 x 20 \$10.50

STORAGE BOXES

- Sketch Pac 2-sided safe storing box 12 3/8" x 4 1/4" x 1 3/4"
- AR-6880AB \$12.95



• One Tray Art Bins 13" x 7 1/4" x 5 3/4". Elevated tray for viewing of supplies in bottom bin. Tight Latch.

- AR-6843AC black \$15.25

**5" Bow Compass & Divider**

An all metal construction compass with replaceable needle and lead. Makes accurate 8" diameter circles. Extra pivot point for use as a divider.

- AR-494 5" Bow Compass \$4.95



Wooden Mannequins

Great for modeling proportions and poses at any angle. Made from carved hardwood.

- AR-CLY9037 6" Male SRP \$12.95
- AR-CLY9036 6" Female SRP \$12.95
- AR-CLY9020 12" Male SRP \$19.95
- AR-CLY9019 12" Female SRP \$19.95
- AR-CLY9042 20" Male SRP \$29.95

• **12" Unisex Wooden Mannequin**
Human Adult figure mannequin with perfect proportions, adjustable joints for posing. Great for modeling proportions involving angles. Made from carved hardwood, 12" in height.
- AR-CW201 12" Model SRP \$19.95



- **Hand Mannequins**
Life-like hardwood hand mannequins are fully articulated. Comes in three sizes: male, female and child.
- AR-HM3 14" Male Hand SRP \$49.95
- AR-HM4 12" Female Hand SRP \$46.95
- AR-HM5 9" Child Hand SRP \$42.95



- **12" Horse Wooden Mannequin**
- AR033090410 SRP \$99.00



- **12" Lizard Wooden Mannequin**
- AR056090440 SRP \$17.99



PRESENTATION CASES (PORTFOLIO)

Spine mounted handle allows pages to hang properly to avoid wrinkling. Features 1" black superior quality rings (Does not snag pages). Includes 10 archival pages (#ZX)

- AR-S1-2171 17" x 14" SRP \$68.95
- AR-S1-2241 24" x 18" SRP \$110.50

Refill Pages for Presentation Case

- AR-ZX17 17" x 14" 10 pack SRP \$23.95
- AR-ZX24 24" x 18" 10 pack SRP \$45.95



ELECTRIC ERASER and REFILLS

KOH-I-NOOR ELECTRIC ERASER

Designed to erase both lead and ink from paper and film. Features a heavy-duty maintenance free 115v motor, protected by a high-impact white LEXAN case. Maximum efficiency with either the No. 287 white vinyl strip eraser for paper or the specially formulated no. 285 imbedded yellow strip eraser for film. Includes a No. 287 strip eraser

- AR-2800E All purpose Electric System SRP \$73.95

CORDLESS/RECHARGEABLE ERASER

Contains a trouble-free motor that delivers up to 4,500 rpm, fully charged. Versatile, two-way operation—cordless or AC. Long lasting rechargeable battery, break resistant LEXAN case. Lightweight, portable recharging stand power pack, plus a No. 287 vinyl strip eraser.

- AR-2850C Cordless, Rechargeable SRP \$96.95

KOH-I-NOOR ERASER REFILLS

- AR-ER285 Yellow, Imbedded, ink, 10/box SRP \$6.95
- AR-ER287 Soft Vinyl, pencil, 10/box SRP \$5.95

LIGHTWEIGHT SKETCH BOARDS

Made of strong tempered masonite with cutout carry handle. Metal clips and rubber band (included) hold paper securely in place.

- AR-SB1819 18 1/2" x 19 1/2" SRP \$9.95
- AR-SB2326 23 1/2" x 26" SRP \$12.95



DISPLAY PORTFOLIOS ARTFOLIOS

24 pages of acid, pvc, and legnen safe art sleeves Archival Safe.

- AR-IA1212 Artfolio Book 11 x 17 w/ 24 shts SRP \$15.95 (Holds Blue Line Comic Book Art Boards)
- AR-IA 1214 Artfolio book 14 x 17 w/ 24 shts SRP \$25.95 (Holds most oversized art boards)
- AR-IA 128 Artfolio book 8 1/2 x 11 w/ 24 shts SRP \$7.50



ARCHIVE SAFE SUPPLIES for ORIGINAL ARTWORK

Blue Line Pro now carries B.C.E. archive-safe supplies. When a portfolio or art sleeve isn't enough to protect your prints, posters, of original artwork, then try Protective Artwork Sheets. These sheets are made of rigid plastic mylar material. In addition, backing boards that easily slide into the slip of the sleeves are available. These sheets come in two different sizes (12 1/2" x 18 1/2" and 18" x 24") and are available in a multitude of quantities, a perfect fit for most Blue Line Pro comic boards. Be on the look out for more B.C.E supplies in the future from Blue Line Pro.

Mylar Sleeve		Backing Board	
(1) 12 1/2" x 18 1/2"		(1) 12 1/4" x 18 1/4"	
- AR-BCE70-1	\$4.95	- AR-BCE41-1	\$1.55
Mylar Sleeve		Backing Board (1)	
(1) 18" x 24"		17 1/2" x 23 1/2"	
- AR-BCE75-1	\$6.00	- AR-BCE42-1	\$2.75
Mylar Sleeves		Backing Board	
(10-pack) of 12 1/2" x 18 1/2"		(10-pack) of 12" x 18"	
- AR-BCE70-10	\$40.00	- AR-BCE41-10	\$12.40
Mylar Sleeves		Backing Board	
(10-pack) of 18" x 24"		(10-pack) of 17 1/2" x 23 1/2"	
- AR-BCE75-10	\$48.00	- AR-BCE42-10	\$19.50
Mylar Sleeves		Backing Board	
(25-pack) of 12 1/2" x 18 1/2"		(25-pack) of 12" x 18"	
- AR-BCE70-25	\$90.00	- AR-BCE41-25	\$28.00
Mylar Sleeves		Backing Board	
(25-pack) of 18" x 24"		(25-pack) of 17 1/2" x 23 1/2"	
- AR-BCE75-25	\$115.00	- AR-BCE42-25	\$45.50



Satin-Glow Lightboxes

Great for transferring drawings onto art boards.

- AR-LB1218 12" x 18" \$205.00
- AR-LB1620 16" x 20" \$325.00
- AR-LB1824 18" x 24" \$485.00

COMIC BOOK ORIGINAL ART SLEEVES

Protect your original Art Work

- **Comic Book Original Art Sleeves**
11 1/2" x 19" Polyethylene (3.0 mil.)
- AR-BAG 1119-25 25 Bags \$7.50
- AR-BAG 1119-100 100 Bag \$25.00



COPIC MARKERS, AIR MARKERS, TONES, REFILLS

COPIC Markers have been widely used in Europe and Asia where their coloring qualities go hand in hand with the style we know as manga. The versatility and variety lends itself to the imagination of the creator and gives him or her options for their creative style. The standard square designed COPIC marker is double ended and fast drying. COPICs have been specially formulated with a toner designed not to dissolve making them able to work directly onto photocopied surfaces and provide clear unblemished color. One of the best parts about COPIC markers is their refillable ink and replaceable nib features.

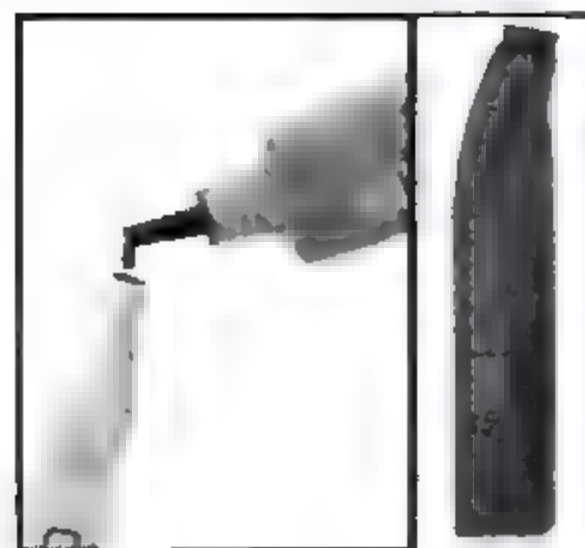
• SINGLE BASIC MARKERS

- \$4.95 each

All Single Colors Available on-line at www.bluelinepro.com or call 859-282-0096

• COPIC MARKER SETS

AR-COP110 COPIC 12 Basic	\$59.40
AR-COP112 COPIC 12 PCS NG	\$59.40
AR-COP114 COPIC 12 PCS TG	\$59.40
AR-COP116 COPIC 12 PCS WG	\$59.40
AR-COP118 COPIC 12 PCS CG	\$59.40
AR-COP120 COPIC 36 Color Set	\$178.20
AR-COP140 Copic 72 Color Set A	\$356.40
AR-COP150 Copic 72 Color Set B	\$356.40
AR-COP155 Copic 72 Color Set C	\$356.40
AR-COP160 Copic Empty Marker	\$3.60



• COPIC Various Ink (Refills) \$5.95

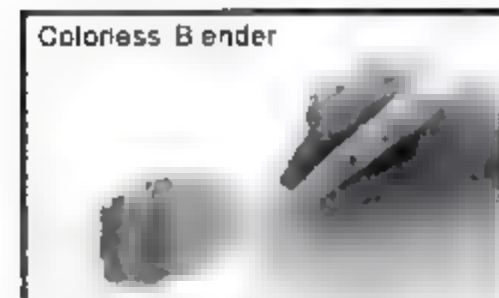
200 SERIES. One of the best parts about COPIC markers standard and sketch is their refillable ink feature. No more tossing out dried out markers. Just fill it back up again and you're ready to go. Refills can be used up six times. This refillable feature gives you the opportunity to make your own color through mixing inks, creating an original color all your own.

All Single Colors Available on-line at www.bluelinepro.com or call 859-282-0096

AR-COP210 Var Ink Colorless Blender	\$3.75
AR-COP220 Var Colorless Blender 200c	\$9.75
AR-COP230 Var Ink Empty Bottle	\$2.65

• REFILL BOOSTER PACK

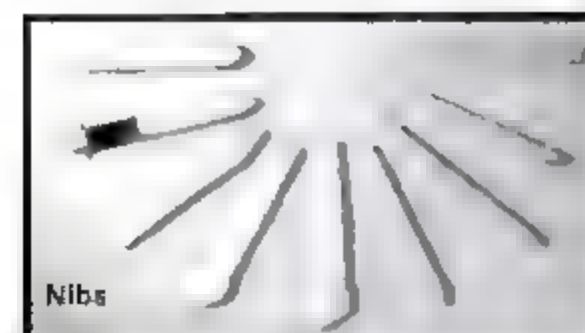
AR-COP-BOOSTER 3-caps w/needles \$4.95



• Replaceable Marker Nibs \$4.20

Another great feature about COPIC markers is their interchangeable nibs. From broad to calligraphy - provide greater freedom of technique in your renderings. COPIC Nibs deliver clear vibrant color on photocopied surfaces as well as glass plastics and metals. The nibs are made of strong but flexible polyester for smooth consistent application. Nibs come in a pack of 10 except for the brush variety that comes in a pack of three.

AR-COP300 Standard Broad	\$4.20
AR-COP310 Soft Broad	\$4.20
AR-COP320 Round	\$4.20
AR-COP330 Calligraphy 5mm	\$4.20
AR-COP340 Brush	\$4.20
AR-COP350 Standard Fine	\$4.20
AR-COP360 Super Fine	\$4.20
AR-COP370 Semi Broad	\$4.20
AR-COP380 Calligraphy 3mm	\$4.20
AR-COP385 Sketch Nib Super	\$4.20
AR-COP90 Sketch Nib Med	\$4.20



• 400 Copic Tweezer \$4.20

Our special COPIC Tweezers give you an easy no-mess nib change that gets you drawing again in minutes. Being able to change nibs quickly helps you keep up with the most demanding marker techniques.

AR-COP400 Tweezer \$4.20

• SINGLE SKETCH MARKERS \$4.95

The oval designed Sketch COPIC marker is double-ended and is fast drying. COPICs have been specially formulated with a toner designed not to dissolve making them able to work directly onto photocopied surfaces and provide clear unblemished color. COPIC Sketch markers' oval body profile gives you a feel of a fast flowing experience in your hands. It paints as well as it draws. They come with a broad nib and a brush like nib, available in medium + broad and super brush making them great for delicate or bold express on (from fashion and graphics to textiles and fine arts lettering/caligraphy). COPIC sketch markers are available in 286 colors. One of the best parts about COPIC markers is their refillable ink and replaceable nib features.

• Single COPIC SKETCH Markers \$4.95

All Single Colors Available on-line at www.bluelinepro.com or call 859-282-0096

AR-COP450 Colorless Blender	\$4.20
AR-COP451 00 Black	\$4.20
AR-COP451 10 Spacia Black	\$4.20
AR-COP452 Sketch 12 Basic Set	\$59.40
AR-COP454 Sketch 36 Basic Set	\$178.20
AR-COP456 Sketch 72 Set A	\$356.40
AR-COP458 Sketch 72 Set B	\$356.40
AR-COP460 Sketch 72 Set C	\$356.40
AR-COP462 Sketch 72 Set D	\$356.40
AR-COP95 Empty sketch marker	\$3.60



• 500 Copic Opaque White \$9.75

COPIC Opaque White is a water based white pigment used for highlight effects. It won't bleed into the base color so it gives sharp line definition and can be used on watercolor as well as other permanent ink surfaces.

AR-COP500 Opaque White \$9.75



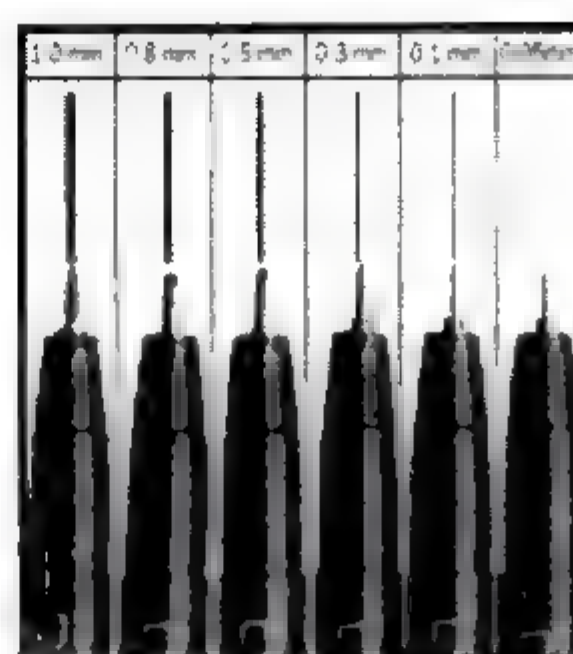
• COPIC PAPERS

AR-COP510 Copic Alcohol Marker Pad A4	\$9.95
AR-COP520 Copic Alcohol Marker Pad B4	\$19.95
AR-COP530 Manga Manuscript Paper A4	\$6.95
AR-COP540 Manga Manuscript Paper B4	\$9.95

• MARKER STORAGE

AR-COP550 72 pc Wire Stand	\$59.95
AR-COP560 36 pc Block Stand	\$29.95

• COPIC's MULTI LINERS drawing pens allow drawing without annoying running ink. They are available in pens and brush. The pens come in a wide range of line widths



(from .05 to 1.0 mm) while the brushes come in three different sizes - small medium and large.

• MULTILINERS SINGLES

AR-COP600 Multiliner .05	\$2.50
AR-COP610 Multiliner .01	\$2.50
AR-COP620 Multiliner .03	\$2.50
AR-COP630 Multiliner .05	\$2.50
AR-COP640 Multiliner .08	\$2.50
AR-COP650 Multiliner 1.0	\$2.50
AR-COP660 Multiliner Brush M	\$2.95
AR-COP670 Multiliner Brush S	\$2.95
AR-COP671 Sepia, ML .05	\$2.50
AR-COP672 Sepia, ML 1	\$2.50
AR-COP673 Sepia, ML 3	\$2.50
AR-COP674 Grey, ML .05	\$2.50
AR-COP675 Grey, ML 1	\$2.50
AR-COP676 Grey, ML 3	\$2.50

• SETS

AR-COP680 Multiliner Set A	\$15.00
AR-COP690 Multiliner Set B	\$20.00



AIR MARKERS

• 705 ABS-1 Kit

ABS-1 Kit COPIC Markers can be used as an airbrush by inserting the broad top end of the pen into our uniquely designed adapter. The Airbrush feature is wonderful for creating backgrounds and filling in larger areas of space. The Airbrush tool creates little or no mess and allows for nearly instant change in color. It's simple to use - just attach one end of the COPIC Airbrush hose to a standard airbrush compressor and the other to the COPIC Airbrush adapter and you're ready to go. A compressed air can that attaches directly to the COPIC Airbrush adapter is available for portability. This is the airbrush ABS-1 Kit. It comes with 1. Air Grip (where the pen goes in) 2. The air adapter (where the empty canister that the air grip screws on to. This canister is just a reservoir, it does not contain air) 3. The air hose (this connects from the bottom of the air adapter to the top of the air can.) 4. The air can 80.5. The air can holder (a foam square with 3 holes in it so that you can stand the different sizes of air cans.) This kit has all of the components in it for someone who would like to have portability but have to option to connect it to a compressor.

AR-COP705 ABS-1 Kit \$60.95

• 710 Starting Set ABS-2

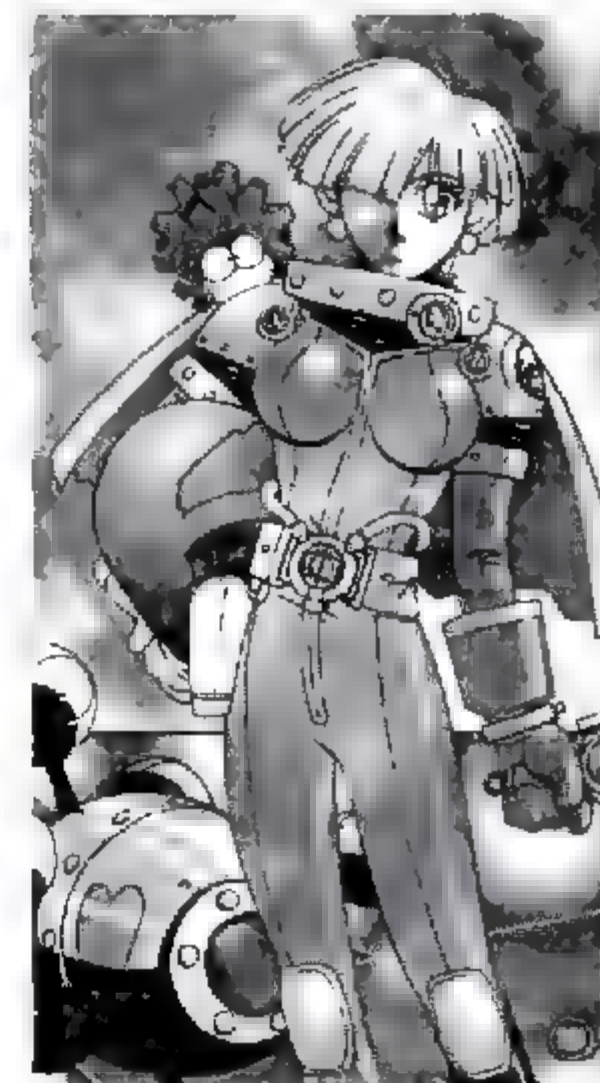
Set ABS-2. COPIC Markers can be used as an airbrush by inserting the broad top end of the pen into our uniquely designed adapter. The Airbrush feature is wonderful for creating backgrounds and filling in larger areas of space. The Airbrush tool creates little or no mess and allows for nearly instant change in color. It's simple to use - just attach one end of the COPIC Airbrush hose to a standard airbrush compressor and the other to the COPIC Airbrush adapter and you're ready to go. A compressed air can that attaches directly to the COPIC Airbrush adapter is available for portability. This is the portable version of our airbrush system. The ABS-2 Kit comes with a D-60 can of compressed air and the Airgrip. This item is great for the artist on the move. ONLY the D-60 air can be attached directly to the air grip because of some special tubing inside the can. The other sizes of air cans 80 and 180 have to be attached to the hose and then to the air adapter. They hold more air but are not so portable.

AR-COP710 Starting Set ABS-2	\$26.50
AR-COP720 Starting Set ABS-3	\$28.50
AR-COP730 Airgrip	\$17.10
AR-COP740 Air Adapter	\$11.40
AR-COP750 Air hose 1/4 to 1/8	\$21.50
AR-COP755 Air hose 1/8 to 1/8	\$21.50
AR-COP760 Air Can D-60	\$8.95
AR-COP763 Air Can 80	\$10.95
AR-COP765 Air Can 180	\$12.95
AR-COP770 Air Compressor	\$186.50

NX Kits

AR-COP810 NX Kit 3	\$20.00
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Starter kit to learn how to use color effects and techniques. Practice Sheets and a Color Guide are included.



ZIP-TONES

Too Professional Tone \$5.00 per sheet
(See the website for over 20 different types and styles of tones.)
Copics very own cut and stick Zip-Tone.

Go to
www.bluelinepro.com
to see additional
Copic Art Supplies!



DELETER Manga Kits - Markers - Papers - Inks - Whiteout - Art Tools

For the serious How To Draw fan, the Deleter line of products is here for you. The Deleter line includes color overlays, screens, jr screens, gradations, inking accessories, and the highly prized Neopiko line of alcohol based, double tipped markers. Give them a try today!

Deleter Inking Accessories

• Pen (Nib) Holder

You can use this for all Maru-pens, G-pens, Aaji-pens (Tama-pen).
AR-DEL3411003 \$3.95

• G-Pen Inking Nib (3pcs)

G-pen is very elastic and drawing main lines or flash line.
AR-DEL3411004 \$2.95

• Maru-Pen Inking Nib (2pcs)

Maru-pen is good for drawing details.
AR-DEL-3411002 \$2.50

• Saji-Pen Inking Nib (10pcs)

Saji-pen is smooth and easy to draw all kinds of lines.
AR-DEL3411007 \$6.95

• Saji-Pen Inking Nib (3pcs)

Saji-pen is smooth and easy to draw all kinds of lines.
AR-DEL3411006 \$3.95

DELETER INKS

• Deleter Black 1

Works well drawing lines and painting.
AR-DEL3410001 \$4.95

• Deleter Black 2

Permanent Ink, can not be removed with an eraser.

AR-DEL3410003 \$4.95

• Deleter Black 3

Completely waterproof with mat finish.
AR-DEL 3410004 \$4.95

• Deleter White 1

Great for touch ups and white details.
AR-DEL 3410002 \$4.95

• Deleter White 2

Great for touch ups and white details. Waterproof.

AR-DEL 3410006 \$4.95

Deleter Neopiko Line Pen

A super dark alcohol marker-type line drawing pen.

• AR-DEL3115005 Neopiko Line .05

• AR-DEL3115010 Neopiko Line .1

• AR-DEL3115020 Neopiko Line .2

• AR-DEL3115030 Neopiko Line .3

• AR-DEL3115050 Neopiko Line .5

• AR-DEL3115080 Neopiko Line .8

• AR-DEL3115100 Neopiko Line 1.0

Neopiko Line Pen each \$2.50

NEOPIKO MARKERS

Neopiko markers are alcohol-based markers that are great for diffusion effects. Their dark colors contrast sharply with the whiteness of paper, making beautiful lines and clear vibrant colors. Great for coloring illustrations and comics. These 144 different colored markers are available in sets. (Note: Color Codes identifies the colors in that set. Consult the Color Key)

• Neopiko Marker S1 Set Starter Set

36 markers, 35 colors

-AR-DEL311-0201 \$84.95

• Neopiko Marker 36A Set

36 - colors Coffee, Ivory, Blush Pink, Powder Pink, Light Brown, Ocher Beige, Naples Yellow, Light Orange, Pink Beige, Apricot, Beige, Sun Tan, Anise, Sweet Pink, Orchid, Pastel Blue, Celadon, Celery, White Lilly, Opal Green, Pale Violet, Mauvette, Saxe Blue, Pale Sky, Sepia, Garnet, Old Rose, Cobalt Blue, Periwinkle, Ever Green, Elm Green, Holly Green, Eggplant, Violet, Pumpkin, Cocoa Brown.

-AR-DEL-311-0203 \$84.95

• Neopiko Marker 36B Set

36 - colors Primrose Yellow, Marigold, Ice Blue, Light Aqua, Carmine, Raspberry, Lettuce Green, Peony, Light Purple, Ice Green, Mint Green, Lemon Yellow, Brilliant Yellow, Cerulean Blue, Strawberry, Signal Red, Antique Blue, Grass Green, Bellflower, Scarlet, Magenta, Vivid Pink, Apple Green, Cool Grey 1, Cool Grey 2, Cool Grey 3, Cool Grey 4, Cool Grey 5, Cool Grey 6, Cool Grey 7, Cool Grey 8, Warm Grey 1, Warm Grey 3, Warm Grey 5, Warm Grey 7.

-AR-DEL311-0204 \$84.95

• Neopiko Marker 72A Set

72 colors - Pale Pink, Shell Pink, Peach, Coral Pink, Sand, Pastel Peach, Flesh, Salmon Pink, Maize, Sunlight Yellow, Cream, Brown Gold, Terra-cotta, Autumn Leaf, Maroon, Black, Yellow Ochre, Dark Brown, Neutral 1, Neutral 3, Neutral 5, Neutral 7, Neutral 9, Pale Yellow, Pale Lemon, Aqua Green, Baby Blue, Pale Green, Mist Green, Pale mauve, Pale Lilac, Pale Blue, Solvent, Baby Pink, Baby Green, Aqua, Med Blue, Turquoise, Rose Pink, Salvia Blue, Steel Blue, Spring Green, Vivid Yellow, Moss Green, Lavender, Tropical, Dull Pink, Dandelion, Sky Blue, Pink, Tobacco Brown, Vivid Red, Ultramarine, Vivid Green, Olive Green, Iris, Orange, Cherry Pink, Emerald, Peacock Green, Cherry Red, Mustard, Burnt Umber, Crimson, Poppy Red, Oriental Blue, Jungle Green, French Blue, Vermilion, Royal Purple, Viridian.

AR-DEL311-0202 \$160.00

• Neopiko Marker 72B Set

72 colors - Coffee, Ivory, Blush Pink, Powder Pink, Light Brown, Ocher Beige, Naples Yellow, Light Orange, Pink Beige, Apricot, Beige, Sun Tan, Anise, Sweet Pink, Orchid, Pastel Blue, Celadon, Celery, White Lilly, Opal Green, Pale Violet, Mauvette, Saxe Blue, Pale Sky, Sepia, Garnet, Old Rose, Cobalt Blue, Periwinkle, Ever Green, Elm Green, Holly Green, Eggplant, Violet, Pumpkin, Cocoa Brown, Primrose Yellow, Marigold, Ice Blue, Light Aqua, Carmine, Raspberry, Lettuce Green, Peony, Light Purple, Ice Green, Mint Green, Lemon Yellow, Brilliant Yellow, Cerulean Blue, Strawberry, Signal Red, Antique Blue, Grass Green, Bellflower, Scarlet, Magenta, Vivid Pink, Apple Green, Cool Grey 1, Cool Grey 2, Cool Grey 3, Cool Grey 4, Cool Grey 5, Cool Grey 6, Cool Grey 7, Cool Grey 8, Warm Grey 1, Warm Grey 3, Warm Grey 5, Warm Grey 7.

-AR-DEL311-0205 \$160.00

• Neopiko Marker (Skin Set)

Color Code: T1

12 colors - 12 Color - Pale Pink, Shell Pink, Peach, Coral Pink, Sand, Pastel Peach, Flesh, Salmon Pink, Maize, Sunlight Yellow, Cream

AR-DEL311-0101 \$28.95

• Neopiko Marker (Brown & Gray Set)

Color Code: T2

12 colors - Brown Gold, Terra-cotta, Autumn Leaf, Maroon, Black, Yellow Ochre, Dark Brown, Neutral 1, Neutral 3, Neutral 5, Neutral 7, Neutral 9

-AR-DEL311-0102 \$28.95

• Neopiko Marker (Pale Color Set)

Color Code: T3

12 colors Colors - Pale Yellow, Pale Lemon, Aqua Green, Baby Blue, Pale Green, Mist Green, Pale mauve, Pale Lilac, Pale Blue, Solvent, Baby Pink, Baby Green

-AR-DEL311-0103 \$28.95

• Neopiko Marker (Light Color Set)

Color Code: T4

12 colors Colors - Aqua, Med Blue, Turquoise, Rose Pink, Salvia Blue, Steel Blue, Spring Green, Vivid Yellow, Moss Green, Lavender, Tropical, Dull Pink.

-AR-DEL311-0104 \$28.95

• Neopiko Marker (Middle Color Set)

Color Code: T5

12 colors - Dandelion, Sky Blue, Pink, Tobacco Brown, Vivid Red, Ultramarine, Vivid Green, Olive Green, Iris, Orange, Cherry Pink, Emerald

-AR-DEL311-0105 \$28.95

• Neopiko Marker (Dark Color Set)

Color Code: T6

12 colors - Peacock Green, Cherry Red, Mustard, Burnt Umber, Crimson, Poppy Red, Oriental Blue, Jungle Green, French Blue, Vermilion, Royal Purple, Viridian.

-AR-DEL311-0106 \$28.95

• Neopiko Marker (Skin Variation Set)

Color Code: T7

12 colors - Coffee, Ivory, Blush Pink, Powder Pink, Light Brown, Ocher Beige, Naples Yellow, Light Orange, Pink Beige, Apricot, Beige, Sun Tan

-AR-DEL311-0107 \$28.95

• Neopiko Marker (Super Pale Set)

Color Code: T8

12 colors - Anise, Sweet Pink, Orchid, Pastel Blue, Celadon, Celery, White Lilly, Opal Green, Pale Violet, Mauvette, Saxe Blue, Pale Sky.

-AR-DEL311-0108 \$28.00

• Neopiko Marker (Smokey Color Set)

Color Code: T9

12 colors - Sepia, Garnet, Old Rose, Cobalt Blue, Periwinkle, Ever Green, Elm Green, Holly Green, Eggplant, Violet, Pumpkin, Cocoa Brown

-AR-DEL311-0109 \$28.95

• Neopiko Marker (Light Variation Set)

Color Code: T10

12 colors - Primrose, Yellow, Marigold, Ice Blue, Light Aqua, Carmine, Raspberry, Lettuce Green, Peony, Light Purple, Ice Green, Mint Green

-AR-DEL311-0110 \$28.95

• Neopiko Marker (Middle Variation) Color

Code: T11

12 colors - Lemon Yellow, Brilliant Yellow, Cerulean Blue, Strawberry, Signal Red, Antique Blue, Grass Green, Bellflower, Scarlet, Magenta, Vivid Pink, Apple Green

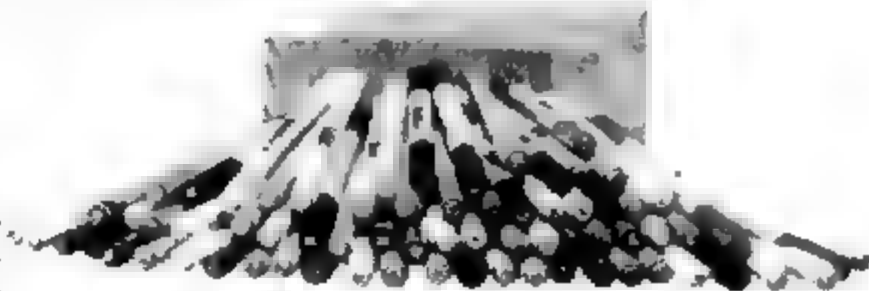
-AR-DEL311-0111 \$28.95

• Neopiko Marker (Gray Variation Set)

Color Code: T12

12 colors - Cool Grey 1, Cool Grey 2, Cool Grey 3, Cool Grey 4, Cool Grey 5, Cool Grey 6, Cool Grey 7, Cool Grey 8, Warm Grey 1, Warm Grey 3, Warm Grey 5, Warm Grey 7

-AR-DEL311-0112 \$28.95



• Neopika SOLVENT Marker

-AR-DELK400 \$2.95

• Neopika BLACK Marker

-AR-DELK600 \$2.95



DELETER

COMIC BOOK PAPER

• DELETER COMIC BOOK PAPER (Type A with scale) (10" x 14")

For Dojinshi, B5 size book, Outline scale A 135kgs (A4 paper B5 print size)

This is very convenient for organizing your frames. Besides the scale, it shows center marks and marks and so on. The paper is smooth for tracing with a pen. The paper size is based on JIS standard. There is 135 kg and 110 kg paper sets and people who contribute or draw many pages of comics can choose, 40 pages. Lines are printed in blue color which will not affect printing.

-AR-DEL201-1002 \$5.95

• DELETER COMIC BOOK PAPER (Type A with scale) (8 1/2" x 11 1/2")

For Dojinshi, B5 size book, Outline scale A 110kgs (A4 paper B5 print size) This is very convenient for organizing your frames. Besides the scale, it shows center marks, end marks and so on. The paper is smooth for tracing with a pen. The paper size is based on JIS standard. There is 135 kg and 110 kg paper sets and people who contribute or draw many pages of comics can choose, 40 pages. Lines are printed in blue color which will not affect printing.

-AR-DEL201-1003 \$4.95

• DELETER COMIC BOOK PAPER (Type A with scale) (8 1/2" x 11 1/2")

For professional Contribution size, Outline scale A 110kgs (B4 paper, Standard outline 220x310mm)

This is very convenient for organizing your frames. Besides the scale, it shows center marks and marks and so on. The paper is smooth for tracing with a pen. The paper size is based on JIS standard. There is 135 kg and 110 kg paper sets and people who contribute or draw many pages of comics can choose, 40 pages. Lines are printed in blue color which will not affect printing.

-AR-DEL201-1005 \$7.95

• DELETER COMIC BOOK

PAPER (Plain Type B) (10"x14")

Professional, Contribution size (B4 paper) plane B 110kgs, 40 sheets.

This paper is smooth for tracing with a pen. The paper size is base of JIS standard. There are 135kg and 110 kg paper sets and people who contribute or draw many pages of comics can choose. Nothing is printed on the paper, so you can use it in many ways as quality paper.

-AR-DEL201-1009 \$4.95



I.C. PRODUCTS Manga Kits - Markers - Papers - Inks - Whiteout - Art Tools

The I.C. line includes color overlays, screens, screens, gradations, and the highly prized Tachikawa line of inking accessories. Give them a try today!



4-FRAME MANGA PAPER A4
4-Panel Manga Manuscript Paper A4 (Doujinshi Size - About 8 1/4 x 11 3/4 inches). 2 horizontal rows or four-panel manga borders on quality paper. Four-panel manga is a style that is short and often funny. (20 sheets)

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4-FRAME MANGA PAPER B4
4 Panel Manga Manuscript Paper B4 (Pro Size About 10 x 14 3/8 inches). 2 horizontal rows or four panel manga borders on quality paper. Four panel manga is a style that is short and often funny (20 sheets)

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MANGA PAPER 110-A4
Manga Manuscript Paper 110 kg A4 (Doujinshi Size Lite). Drawing paper. About 8 1/4 x 11 3/4 inches with 1/2 inch blue ruler guides for help with keeping proportions. Thinner paper, so it is easier to handle in large quantities. High quality, smooth paper. Perfect for the both beginners and professionals! (40 sheets)

-ARIC-105006 \$8.95

MANGA PAPER 110-B4
Manga Manuscript Paper 110 kg B4 (Pro Size Lite) About 10 x 14 3/8 inches with 1/2 inch blue ruler guides all around for help with keeping proportions. The lines do not show when you make copies. (40 sheets)

-ARIC-105501 \$7.95

MANGA PAPER 135-A4
Manga Manuscript Paper 135 kg A4 (Doujinshi Size Heavy) Drawing paper. About 8 1/4 x 11 3/4 inches with 1/2 inch blue ruler guides for help with keeping proportions. High quality, smooth paper. Perfect for the both beginners and professionals! (40 sheets)

-ARIC-160043 \$7.95

MANGA PAPER 135-B4
About 10 x 14 3/8 inches with 1/2 inch blue ruler guides all around for help with keeping proportions. The lines do not show when you make copies. (40 sheets)

-ARIC-160050 \$9.50

MANGA PAPER COVER A5 SIZE BK
Paper Cover for Manuscript Paper A5 size. Each pack comes with special papers for different needs. Paper is an important tool for artists. Experiment with these different pa-



pers to expand your art. Kent Paper (2 Sheets, 135kg) for screen tones, overlays, markers and black and white ink. BB Kent Paper (1 Sheet, 160kg) for color ink, water colors and colored pencils. Kansons Paper (1 Sheet, 160kg) for color ink, pastels, crayon and water colors. And I.C. Copy Card (1 sheet) for thick tracing use or to protect your color images.

-ARIC-160104 \$8.95

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Paper Cover for Manuscript Paper B5. Each Cover paper pack comes with special papers for different needs. Experiment with these different papers to expand your art. Kent Paper (2 Sheets, 135kg) for screen tones, overlays, markers and black and white ink. BB Kent Paper (1 Sheet, 160kg) for color ink, water colors and colored pencils. Kansons Paper (1 Sheet, 160kg) for color ink, pastels, crayon and water colors. And I.C. Copy Card (1 sheet) for thick tracing use or to protect your color images.

-ARIC-160111 \$10.95

POST CARD SIZE

MANGA PAPER

Smaller manga paper.

-IC-160548 \$2.95



Make Your Own Zip-A-Tone!

COPY FILM A4

Make your own tone designs using a photocopy machine and your art! Film area is about 8 1/4 x 11 3/4 inches. (5 sheets)

-ARIC-111007 \$9.95

COPY FILM B4

Copy Film B4 Make your own tone designs using a photocopy machine and your art! Film area is about 10 x 14 3/8 inches. (5 sheets)

-ARIC-160067 \$9.95



IC COMIC SUPER BLACK (INK)

30 ml. Smooth black ink.

-ARIC-160265 \$5.00



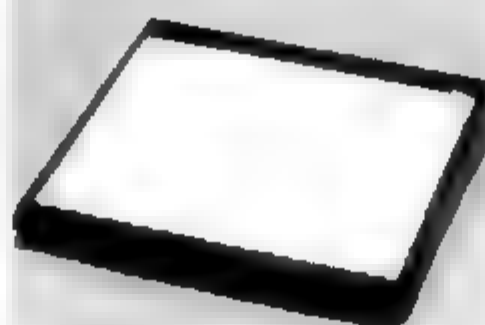
IC COMIC SUPER WHITE (INK)

30 ml. Smooth white ink.

-ARIC-160166 \$5.00

LETTARO-KUN WRITING PAPER SET

-ARIC-160395 \$5.95



LIGHT TRACER "ARTY" PRO A4

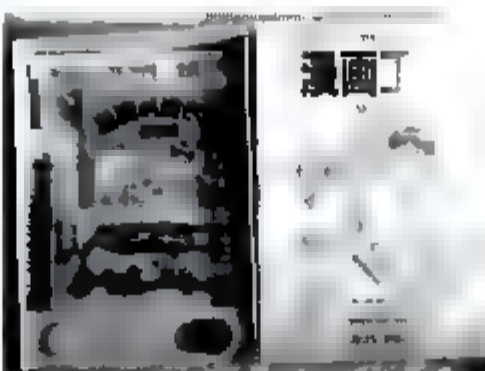
Light box is 360 mm x 300 mm x 60 mm (about 14 x 12 x 2.5 inches). Drawing Size is 320 x 230 mm (about 12.6 x 9 inches). Uses 10 Watt bulb (included) and runs 50/60 Hz. Weighs 1.4 kg (about 3.1 lbs) and PORTABLE! The light box has a metal strip running at the top. You no longer have to tape your art on! You can just use magnets!

-ARIC-160678 SRP \$105.00

LIGHT TRACER "ARTY" PRO B4

Light box is 450 mm x 340 mm x 65 mm (about 18 x 14 x 3 inches). Drawing Size is 365 x 265 mm (about 14.5 x 10.5 inches). Uses 10 Watt bulb (included) and runs 50/60 Hz. Weighs 1.8 kg (about 4 lbs) and PORTABLE! The light box has a metal strip running at the top. You no longer have to tape your art on! You can just use magnets!

-ARIC-160685 \$120.00



MANGA CLUB KIT

This kit has the tools for all manga artists. It comes with the Basic how to draw manga book. Contains 2

sizes of paper, burnisher, 2 types of tones, stencil for curve lines. Includes 2 G-Pen tips, 2 Maru Pen tips, 2 pen holders and black ink and white ink.

-ARIC-160128 \$49.95



MANGA CLUB KIT (MINI)

Children's starter kit. Comes with postcard sized paper that demonstrate how to use tone and ink. Includes 2 G-Pen tips, 2 Maru Pen tips, 2 pen holders. Mini demo tone, black ink and white ink. Perfect gift for artistic children and those who just want to try manga art techniques out.

-ARIC-160302 \$30.95

MIZOBIKI LUN

(LINE HELPER)

-ARIC-160159 \$3.25

MOKUSEI MARU PEN

HOLDER N-17

This wooden pen-holder holds a variety of nibs.

-IC-300908 \$3.80

MOKUSEI PEN HOLDER N-20

This wooden pen-holder holds a variety of nibs.

-ARIC-301073 \$4.30

NIKKO G-PEN 3-PACK

Flexible pen nib capable of drawing thin and thick lines with the amount of pressure added. Manga artists in Japan swear by this multi-use pen. Face lines are usually drawn by the G-pen.

-ARIC-302063 \$4.30

NIKKO MARU PEN

Nikko Maru-Pen 2-Pack Small pen tip. Equivalent to crow quill. This stiff pen-nib is used by manga artists for detailed lines such as eyes, hair, and wrinkles in clothes.

-ARIC-302094 \$4.30

NIKKO NIHON-MOJI PEN

A pack of 3-nibs.

-ARIC-302087 \$4.30

NIKKO SAJI-CHROME

Large pen tip. Also known as a spoon-pen. Used to draw thicker lines and overall general drawing

-ARIC-302056 \$4.30

NIKKO SCHOOL PEN

-ARIC-302070 \$4.30



PRO GEAR 3 IN 1 SET

This Pro Gear set comes with Progear Cutter, Progear Screen tool and Progear Varnisher 2. The best value for your toning needs. All Progear tools are ergonomically correct for your comfort! Cutter blades can be refilled with ordinary knife blades.

-ARIC-160005 \$13.95



PRO GEAR CUTTER

Ergonomically designed to fit comfortably in your hand. Small blade so you can see where you are cutting tone. Comes with black blades. Don't worry if you run out of blades, though. You can also refill the cutter with blades from any art store.

-ARIC-160012 \$6.95



PRO GEAR SCREEN TOOL

Used to smooth down tones on to paper. Flat ends for large area coverage. Ergonomically shaped for ease of use!

-ARIC-160036 \$4.95



PRO GEAR VARNISHER

Slim tip type burnisher. Used for delicate toning. All Progear tools are ergonomically correct for your comfort!

-ARIC-160029 \$4.95

TACHIKAWA 600 CHROME

3-pack of pen nibs.

-ARIC-302001 \$4.30

TACHIKAWA FREE SIZE PEN

HOLDER

Holds pen nibs.

-ARIC-300700 \$4.50

TACHIKAWA G PEN

-ARIC-302018 \$4.30

TACHIKAWA MARU PEN

3-pack of pen nibs.

-ARIC-302049 \$4.30

TACHIKAWA

MARU PEN HOLDER

Holds pen nibs.

-ARIC-300649 \$3.80

TACHIKAWA

NIHON MOJI PEN

3-pack of pen nibs.

-ARIC-302032 SRP \$4.30

TACHIKAWA SCHOOL PEN

-ARIC-302025 \$4.30

YOUTH SCREENTONES

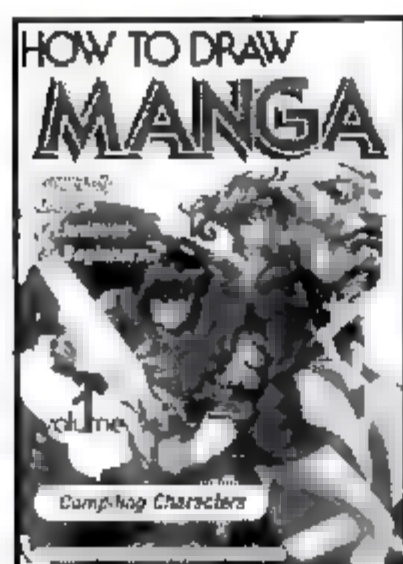
Youth Screen Tones measure 10.0 x 14.0 x 0.1, and are available in a nearly infinite variety. Please contact for a full tone catalog.

\$3.50 each.





HOW TO DRAW MANGA
Giant Robots Special Edition
ITEM# AB1015-m6 \$20.95



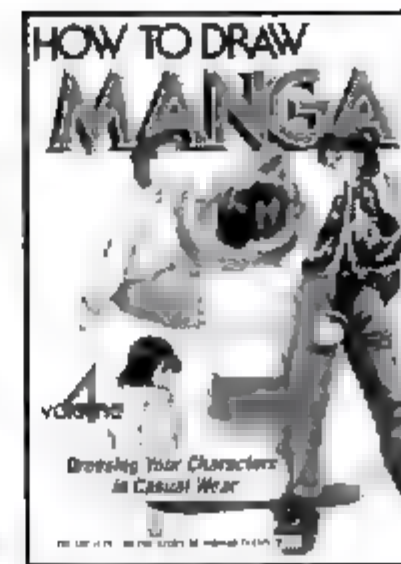
HOW TO DRAW MANGA V. 1
Compiling Characters
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HOW TO DRAW MANGA V. 2
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HOW TO DRAW MANGA
Things in Perspective
ITEM# AB1015m12 \$21.95



HOW TO DRAW MANGA
More Pretty Gals
ITEM# AB1015m13 \$21.95



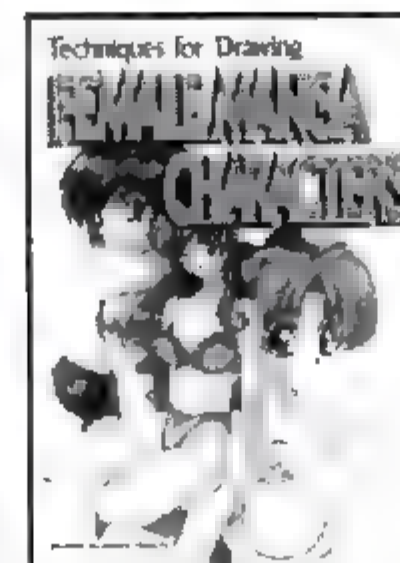
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Pen-Tone Techniques
ITEM# AB1015m14 \$21.95



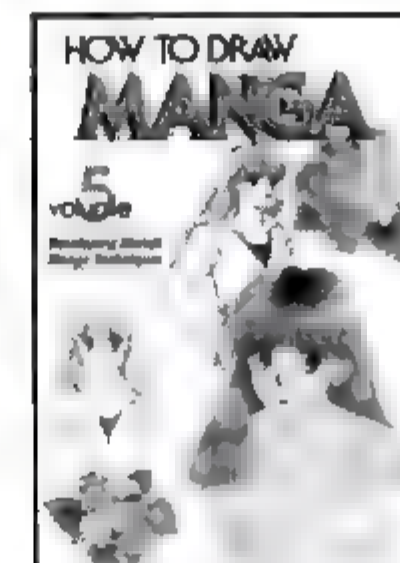
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Costume Encyclopedia
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HOW TO DRAW MANGA
Digital Comic Guide vol 1
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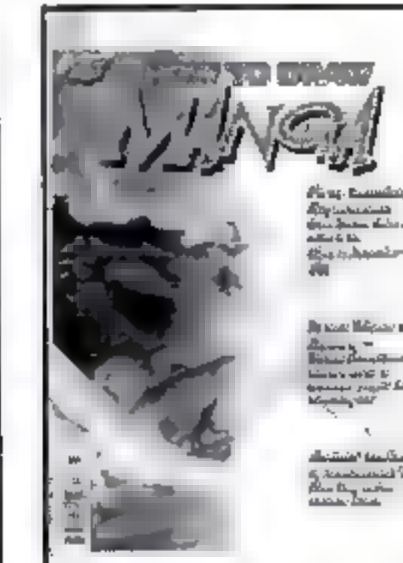
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Female Manga Characters
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Monthly Comic Book
32 pages / B&W \$4.95
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GAME CHARACTERS**
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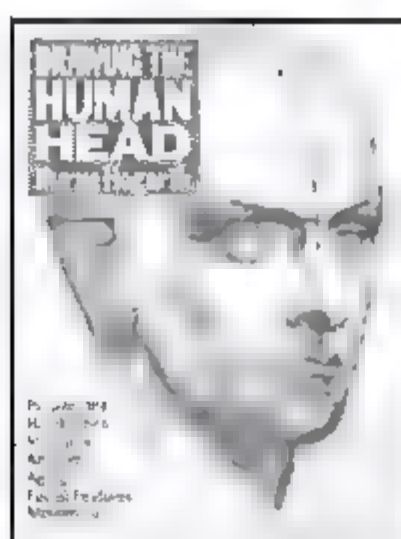
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GAME CHARACTERS**
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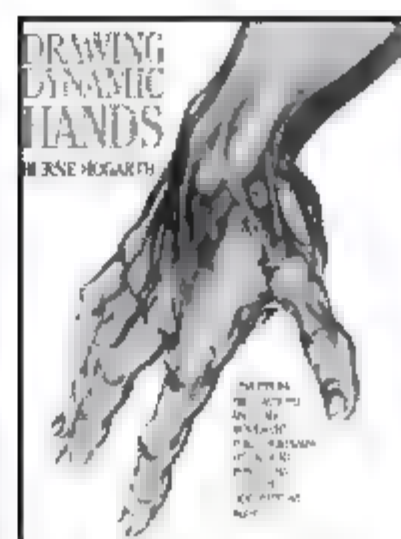
**DRAWING THE HUMAN
HEAD**
ITEM# AB1003 \$22.75



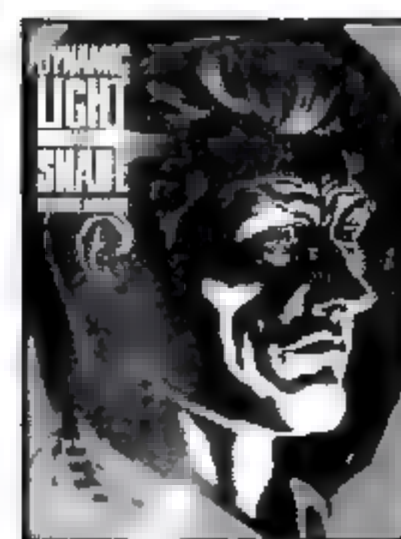
**DYNAMIC WRINKLES/
DRAPERY**
ITEM# AB1005 \$29.00



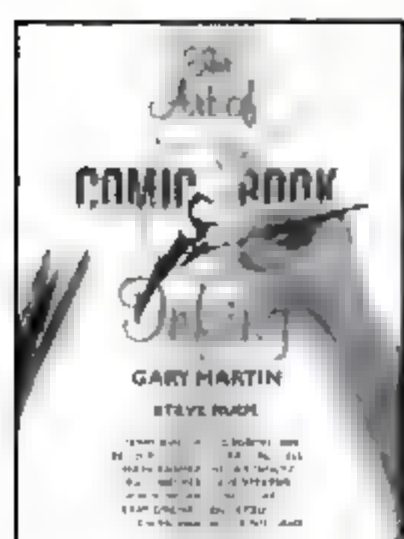
DYNAMIC ANATOMY
ITEM# AB1002 \$25.25



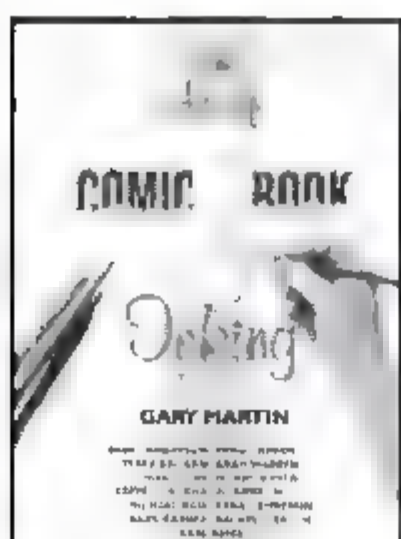
DRAWING DYNAMIC HANDS
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**DYNAMIC LIGHT AND
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**ART OF COMIC BOOK
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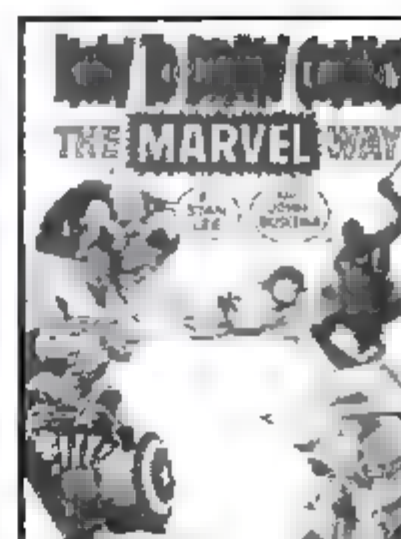
**ART OF COMIC BOOK
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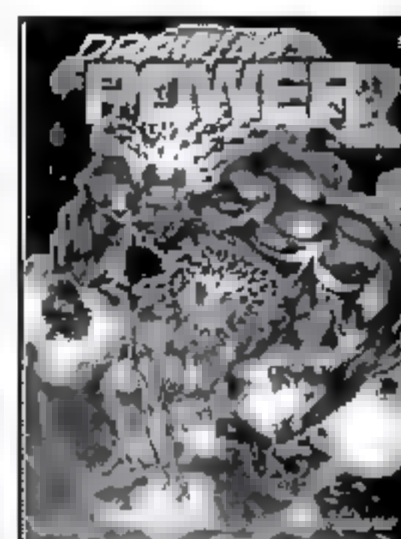
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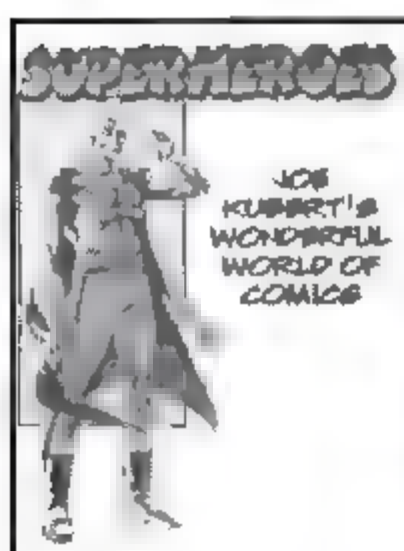
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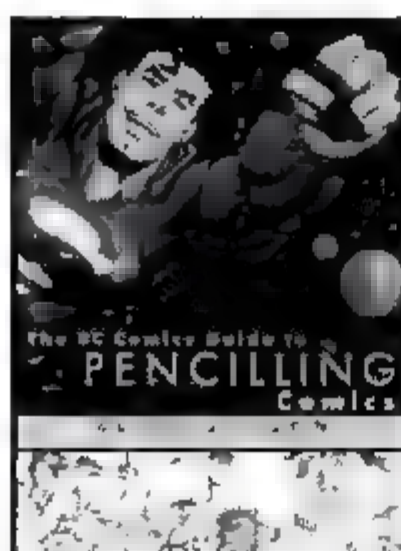
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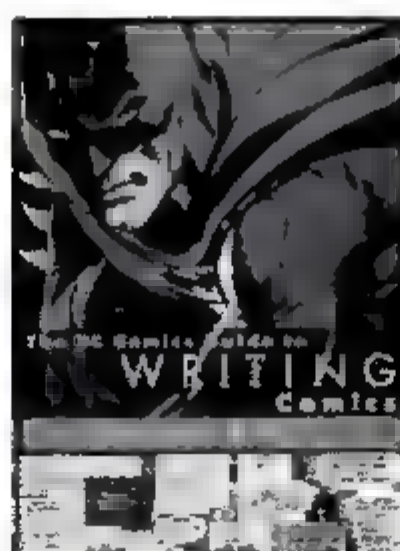
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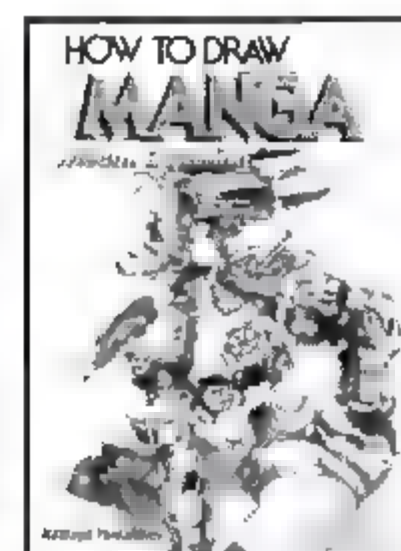
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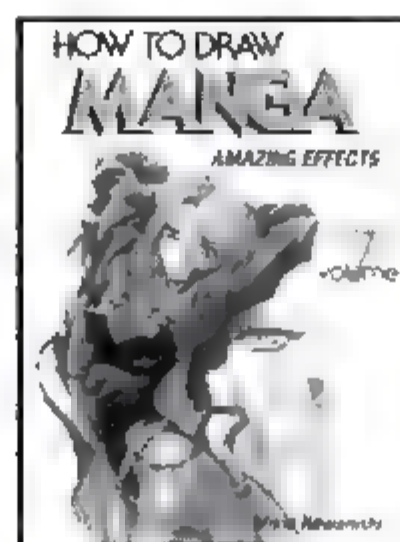
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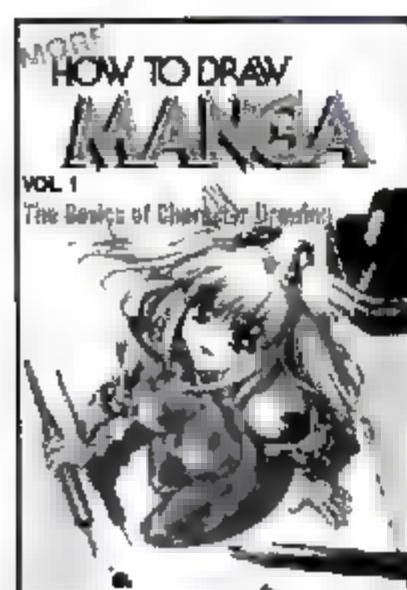
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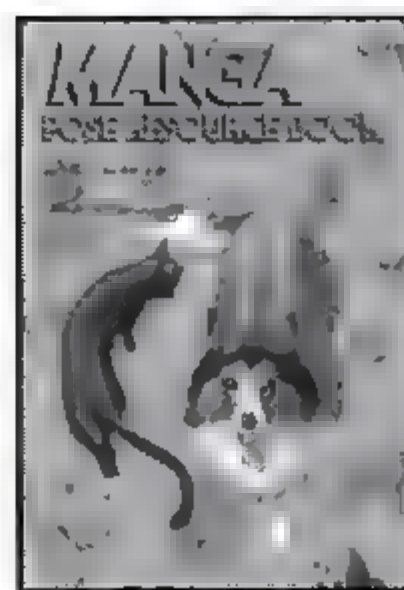
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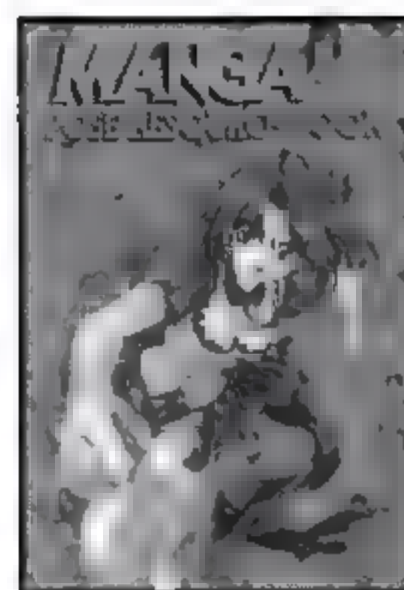
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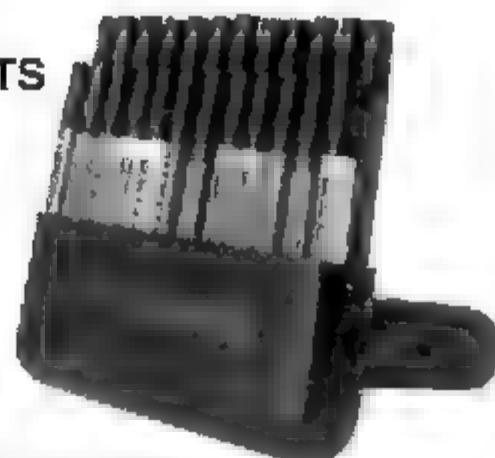
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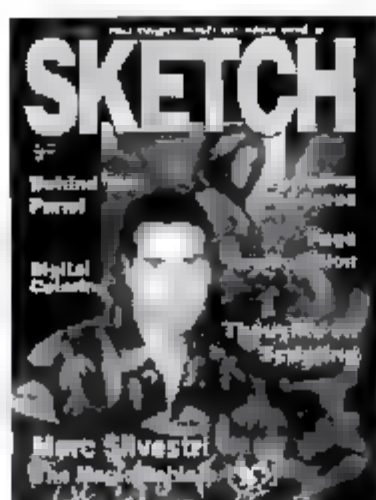
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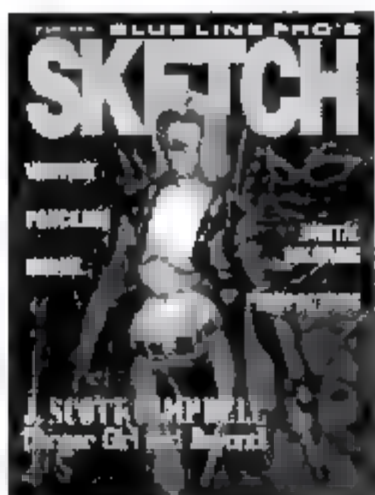
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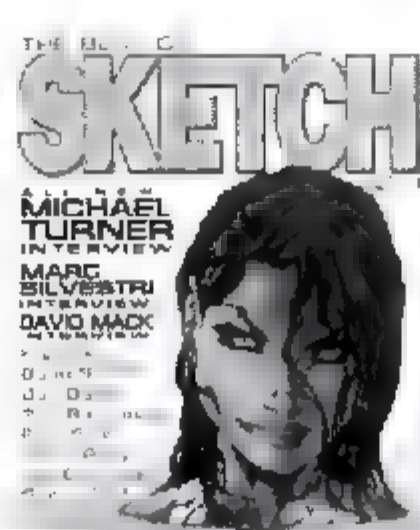
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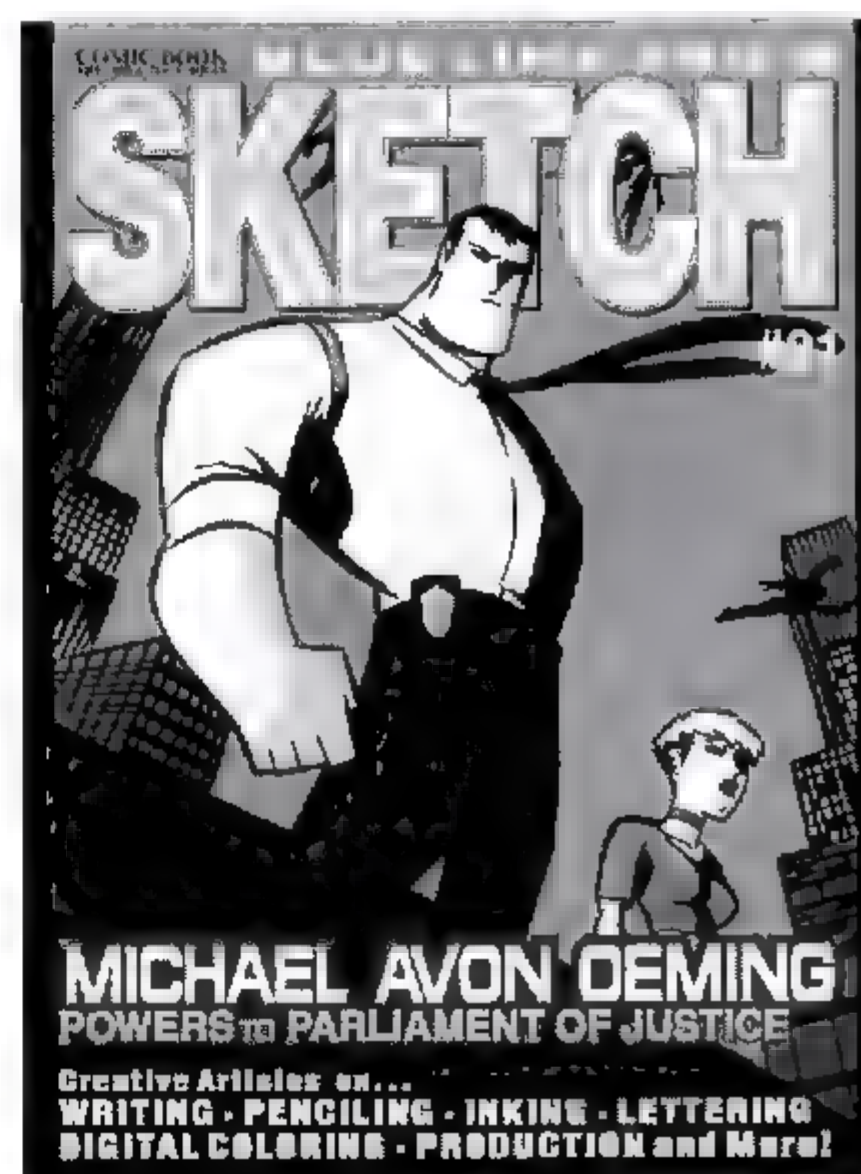
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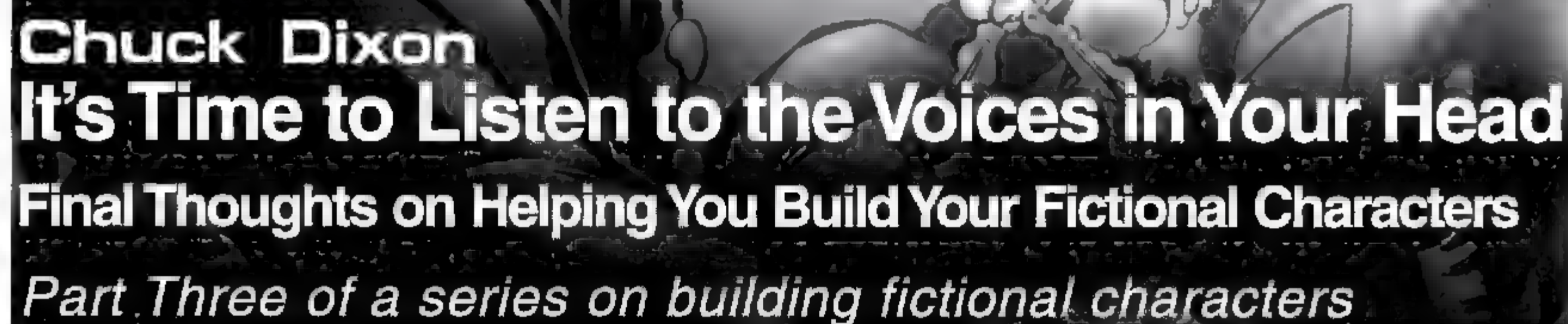
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It's Time to Listen to the Voices in Your Head

Final Thoughts on Helping You Build Your Fictional Characters

Part Three of a series on building fictional characters

As promised, this is the third of my articles on characterization; building and understanding personalities for your fictional creations. It'll probably be the last because this is getting to be too much like work.

So, I'm gonna run over two last points on how to display and explore your character's personality in the confines of the comic book medium without writing dozens of interior dialogue narration captions or, God forbid, thought balloons.

VOICE.

This is how your character talks. It's not just *what* he says. *How* he talks says a lot about him. It involves phrasing, slang, vocabulary and meter. Doctor Doom might use the word "facilitate" in a sentence, but Frank Castle *never* would. Batman speaks pretty formally and correctly because he strives for perfection in everything. Nightwing less so, with contractions and colloquialisms like "gonna" and "shoulda" because he's more action oriented. Robin is slightly more formal but uses a higher vocabulary level since he's the brainy type.

BATMAN: *YOU WILL FACE ROUGH JUSTICE NOW, JOKER.*

NIGHTWING: *I'M GONNA BEAT YOU STUPID, JOKER!*

ROBIN: *YOU'RE THE ONE WHO RAISED THE STAKES TO PHYSICAL FORCE, JOKER.*

Same message. Different voice.

And your wording is important because you must make your reader hear the voice in their head. No actor is going to *read* the dialogue to them. They must create a consistent voice in their mind, and it's your job to put it there. Bill Watterson rejected offers to make animated specials of *Calvin and Hobbes* because then the voice of some actors would replace the voices the reader heard in their head. Admit it, you had a voice in your head for Daredevil, and it sure as heck didn't sound like Ben Affleck.

In a movie the dialogue can be made by the actor reading it. Bill Murray reads a line and it's funny. Christopher Walken reads the same line and you're wetting your seat at the Multiplex. But you have to sell your dialogue by your choice of words and phrasing.

Play this game in your head. Takes some characters you're familiar with and write dialogue for a scene with them playing the parts. It forces you not only to think of how their character would react, but how they would reflect that reaction in their own voice.

CAPTAIN KIRK: I NEED VOLUNTEERS FOR AN AWAY TEAM.

CHANDLER FROM FRIENDS: I AM SO NOT INTO THAT.

But that's icon characters, right? What about people you make up out of thin air? Where's their voice come from, and how the heck do you keep it consistent? The simplest solution is to base each character on someone you know and phrase your dialogue as though they were saying it. As Nietzsche said, "A writer uses his own and his friends' intellects." So, you may as well go all the way and use their words. Trust me, they won't "hear" themselves in your dialogue. No one recognizes their verbal tics in themselves. I've based characters' voices on my father, my wife, friends, kids, public figures, and my fellow pros. I've heard of writers using how they imagine their dog or cat might sound if those critters could speak. You could even use other fictional characters you're very familiar with, as long as you only use the voice.

Voice is so important because you don't want all of your characters sounding like the inner monologue in your head. We've all read books or seen TV or movies where all of the characters sound like the same person speaking to themselves. Ever watch *Nothern Exposure* after the first two seasons? Or we've seen characters where the dialogue reads and sounds like they have absolutely no personality of their own. Like Anakin Skywalker.

And please don't try and give any of your characters an "up to the minute" voice. Avoid bleeding-edge, current slang because:

- a) If *you've* heard it then it's probably already out of date.
- b) In five years your stories will read as badly as Stan Lee's dialogue in *Spider-Man* when Peter was wearing fringed leather vests.
- c) You'll probably get it wrong anyway.

Also, dialects. Foreign and regional dialects are very tricky if you're not *very* familiar with the country or region. Like the Brit writers who have American characters using the phrase "as well" instead of "too." And most writers who include dialect in their characters speech are, intentionally or not, looking down on people who speak that way. The most oft maligned are Southerners and Latinos. In too many writers' hands characters from south of the Mason-Dixon Line have their dialogue based on the weekend the writer spent in a Holiday Inn with CMT the only channel available on the TV. And any Hispanic character comes off like a Mexican bandit saying things like "*Madre dios!*" even if they're from Puerto Rico. And don't get me started on any Cajuns who show up in comics, *cheri*.

QUIRKS.

Everyone has things unique to them. Little tells and body language that are all their own. The guy in *Angel* slouches, but only when he plays that character. Al Bundy sits with one hand in his pants. David Letterman shows you his jacket lining at the opening of each show. Danny Glover does that thing with his neck in the *Lethal Weapon* movies that's now such a cliché. Elaine Benes on *Seinfeld* had the body language of someone that is uncoordinated but *believes* herself to be graceful.

Each one of these personal tics and quirks play into character. The way Commissioner Gordon dresses like an unmade bed. The way, when he's relaxing, that The Flash looks more relaxed than anyone has ever been with medications. The way Wolverine always looks like a coiled spring. Sure, a lot of this is up to the artists, but you've got to come up with ones of your own to suggest. In *Way of the Rat*, if there's food around Po Po is always eating it. Leave a bowl of fruit



Nightwing and Batman from Chuck's Nightwing Rough Justice trade paperback. DC Comics Artwork by Scott McDaniel and Karl Story

on a table and he'll park himself by it. This not only gives the monkey something to do when he's not talking but also shows that the little guy's got no consumption monitor. Be it spirits or food he has to indulge. And especially in scenes where he is not free to talk he'll look for distractions. He's the kind of highly intelligent mind that is easily bored.

When I was writing *Batman* and had to script scenes with just Bruce Wayne in them, I always wrote him with a golf club in his hand. It gave him a prop and an excuse to be doing something other than simply standing or sitting in dialogue sequences. But it also served other purposes. It gave anyone he was talking to him the impression that Bruce really wasn't listening, and reinforced their ideas of him as a spoiled dunderhead. The golf club gimmick also gave Bruce something mindless to do while the Batman portion of his mind worked on what the other person was saying.

But don't make your character *just* about a quirk. Nobody wants to read about a character whose most compelling feature is a monocle or wooden leg. At that point you're not writing, you're playing.

That's about it for the subject of characterization, except to say that everything you write should play to character; mannerisms, dress, speech, and what kind of car the person drives. And you can't be expected to come up with this stuff on your own. That's why you have to keep your eyes and ears open for interesting bits of business in the people around you that you can use.

It's Only Paper!

by Bob Hickey

We get a lot of questions about our Blue Line Pro Comic Book Art Boards. The art board that seems to generate the most inquiries is the Full Trim Comic Book Art Boards which has the same borders as our Premiere Art Boards. So I thought we would break down these borders and explain what each term means.

But, first remember that these art boards only offer suggested panels to help save time by standardizing a format and size.

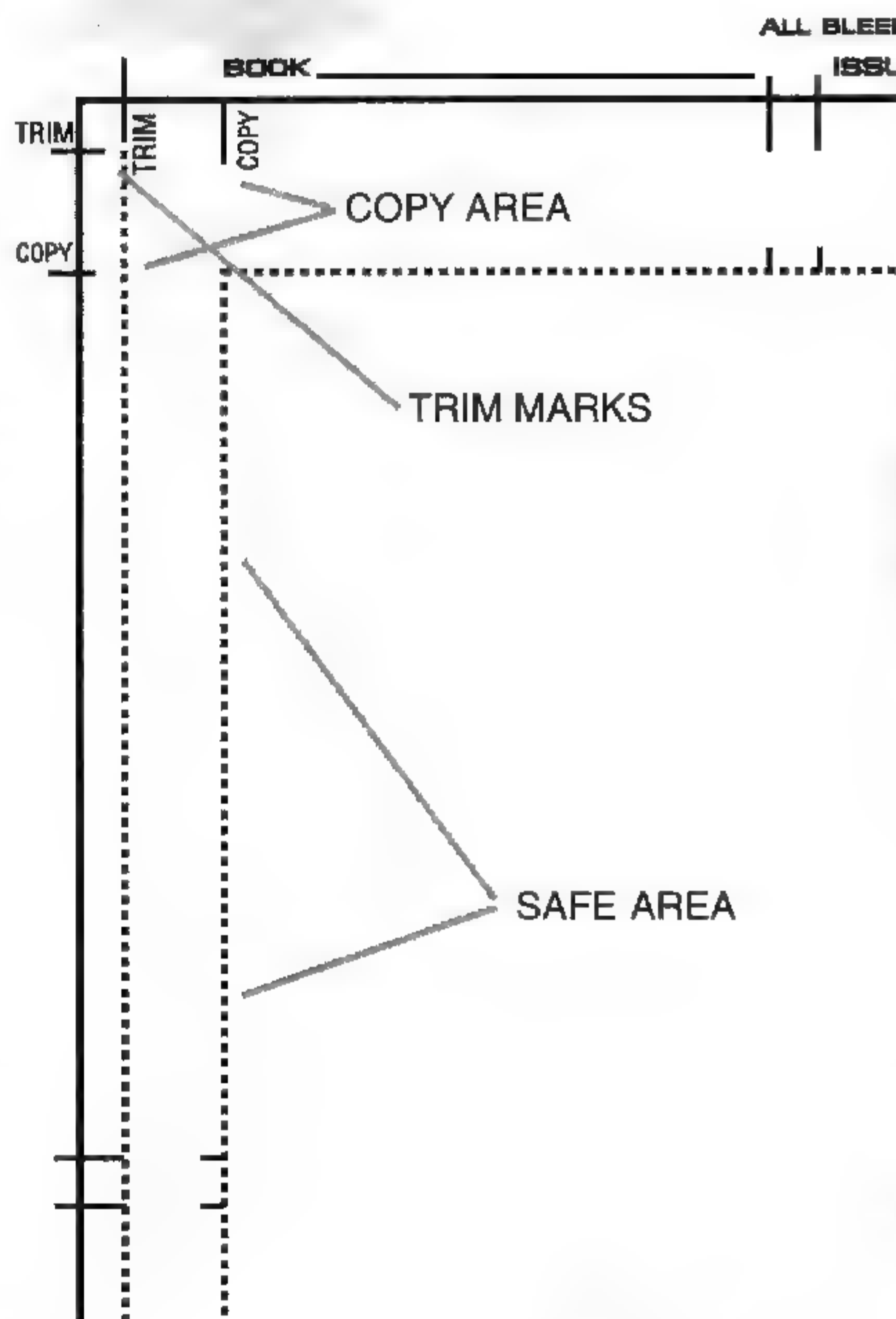
The center border, or safe area, is the area on the page where a comic book illustrator can draw whatever they want inside of that border without worrying about the chance of the printer cutting off part of their artwork. Some artists that like to draw in a standard format of six to nine panels per page use the center border. Here you'll have to remember that you are drawing smaller (not much, but some smaller) than if you were using the traditional comic book art borders. Very importantly, you'll want to make sure to allow for word balloons inside the center (safe area) border.

The outer border has small lines at each corner. The lines that are marked "copy" coincide with the safe area border. This tells you to keep the word balloons inside of this area. In the case that you want a sound effect to be trimmed or if a balloon is meant to be cut, then go ahead and place the balloon or sound effect beyond that safe area.

The second set of small lines is marked "trim." This means the printer should be cutting the finished comic book around this area. But remember that the publisher must scan your artwork, and then have it lettered and colored. Where the printer actually trims your page may vary, this is the reason for the safe area. If you want your artwork to bleed off the page then simply draw to the outer border.

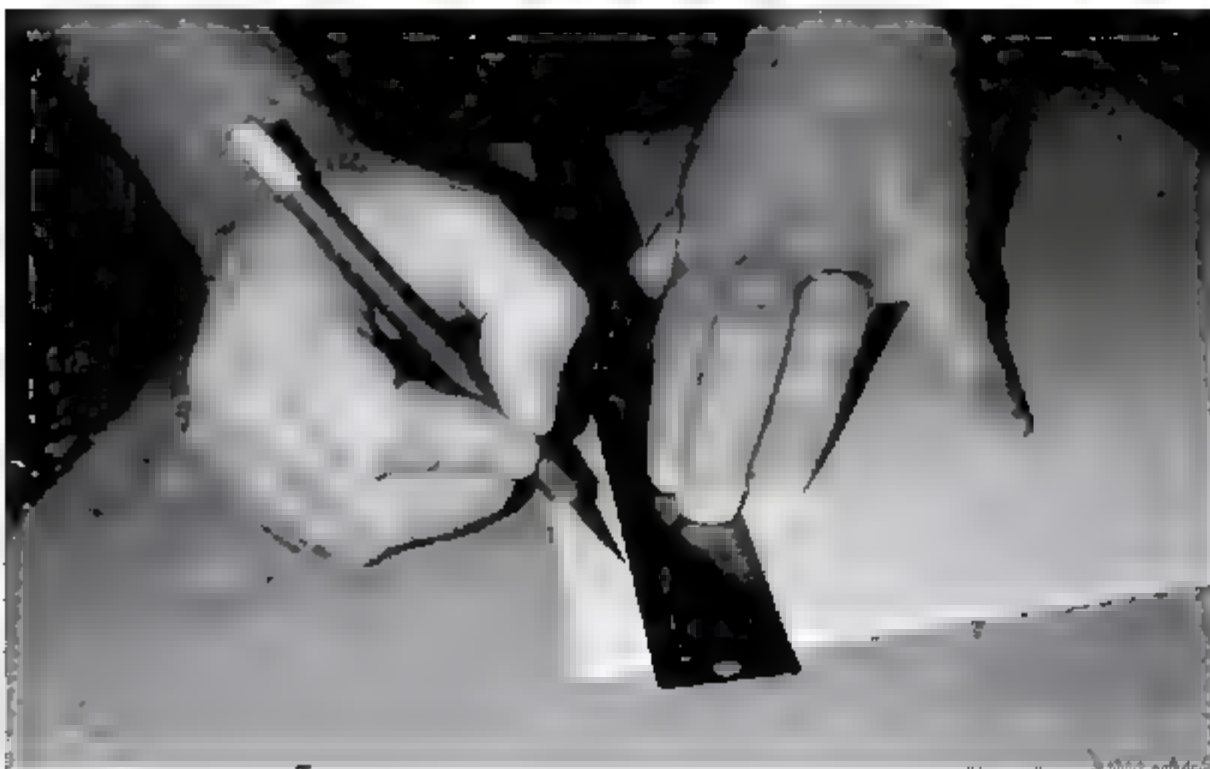
Two-Page Spreads

To make a two page spread cut the right hand side piece of full trim art board, use the trim marks as a reference to cut the page. Use an X-acto knife and a metal ruler to make the cut. Be sure to keep the knife straight up and down to make a clean cut. Then cut the left side of the second art board. Turn both pages over and tape on the back. And keep that old saying "neatness counts" in mind. You'll want your pages to seam together as smoothly as possible, with no wavy stretch or nicked-out bits. This leads to trouble for your penciling, and especially for your





The right way to cut a two page spread.



Wrong and dangerous. Always be careful when using a x-acto knife.



Not every kind of tape is meant to be used on paper.



Taping two pages together.

inker, for obvious reasons. And keep that tape on the back of the pages smooth, no wrinkles or air bubbles.

And watch what kind of tape you use on your board backs. Artists are known for using anything lying around the area for last minute needs or some little thing that doesn't seem that important. Sometimes it works – people out there sometimes get results with everything from no-name half-dry markers they found in a discount bin to their old used toothbrush. While we encourage you to experiment, and it certainly helps to prove resourceful as it's impossible to anticipate every eventuality, watch it when you come to tools. You'd be surprised, and may laugh if you aren't horrified, at some of the stories related to us by artists concerning their early efforts.

While some of you may think ahead...don't use duct tape. Don't use glass tape, electrical tape, or anything else that looks "cool" or "strong." Sure, it will bind all the cords running out of your PS2, stereo, TV, and microwave together to keep them out of your dog's way on the floor – but it won't do your pages any favors. You should use a basic paper/masking tape, something with a non-aggressive adhesive that won't cause you heartbreak at accidental damage of your work. This is your art we're talking about, you don't want something that will age and yellow your board, get gummy and seep through the paper (in less time and heat than you might think), or prove impossible to remove without tearing a minimum of work. Your double page spread will go to your editor, inker, and others – you never know when the pages might have to be temporarily separated.

If your cut isn't perfect don't worry about it, you'll get better each time. But if you've never trimmed or cut board or paper at this point, it's a very good idea to practice on something other than your art board. Board can get expensive, and it's a shame to make some into scrap because of some bad cutting. As I said, keep that knife straight and that metal edge steady. Even if you're trying to cut corners for some reason or in a hurry, it's obviously not a good idea to use a wooden ruler or any kind of plastic straight edge when cutting your spread board – that takes a more practiced hand. And if this is the first time you've worked on a professional publisher-ready two-page spread, you might be wondering why you have to cut the board at all? This allows for the gutter (the space between each page) to be properly spaced.

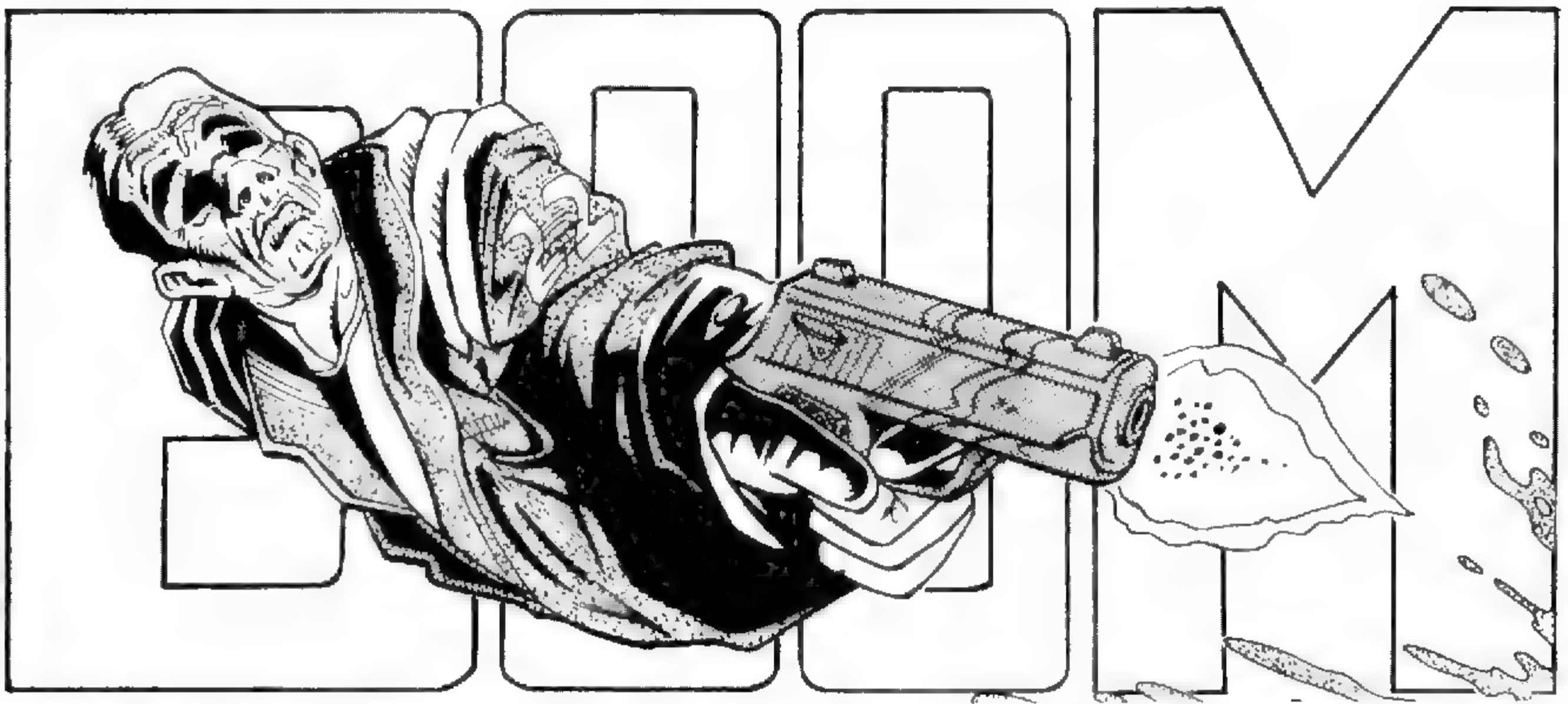
Now that you've taken the time to carefully assemble your boards for your two-page spread, don't forget to center your pages by using the T-square along the bottom edge of the outer border and tape them to your art table. Finally – now you're ready to pencil away!

Later, when your book hits the stands you may see that your pages are printed slightly off center or crooked - it's unfortunate and can be unsightly, but not your fault. Off centering can happen when the pages are printed, but the actual art boards are fine

Of course, make sure how your book is going to be printed. Knowing the format will help you choose the right board for the job. Learn to recognize your trim, safe areas, and bleed right away to avoid any odd looking pages and awkward art cut-offs when you see your book on the rack.

This should settle some confusion about things. But if you have any more questions about comic art board in general, or Blue Line board in particular, drop us a line here at Sketch.

COMICBOOKTECH@BLUEINEPRO.COM



Tom Bierbaum

The Universe at Your Finger Tips

Thoughts on Scripting Comic Books

101 Tips for Saying It in Plain English

Okay, I admit it. I never paid a lot of attention to my grammar lessons in school. I took no grammar courses in college. I never worried much about it as a comic-book writer. I never saw a big need to learn rules that only maybe 5% of the readership was aware of and cared about.

But because of that attitude, I sometimes found myself learning some things the hard way — making a mistake in print and being corrected after the fact.

So okay, it's the most boring part of writing imaginable, but let's spend a little time going over some basic rules and suggestions regarding grammar, spelling, and punctuation. You'll note that I'm far from an expert, and not exactly a slave to the more refined rules of formal grammar. The idea here is to avoid distracting and obvious errors, rather than achieve grammatical skills of term-paper caliber.

1. In general, try to use words you really know and are comfortable with, and when you use a word you're not 100% confident about, look it up. Examples of words I've misused or seen others misuse are:
2. "Bemused" means confused, not amused.
3. "Hopefully" means "in a hopeful manner," so we can say "he hopefully opened the gift." But when we say, "Hopefully it won't rain today," what we really mean is, "I hope it won't rain today." (This misuse is so common that it's hardly worth worrying about, but you can give your prose a touch of added polish by avoiding it.)
4. "Irregardless" is a more pretentious way of saying "regardless," and is considered substandard.
5. "Penultimate" doesn't mean "really ultimate," it means second-to-last.
6. "Success" isn't good or bad. You can have a lot of success or you can have little success, but you can't have "good success" or "great success." It's the same for "progress" — you can have a lot of progress, but not "good progress."
7. "Unique" means one of a kind, so something is either unique or it isn't. It can't be more unique or very unique. The word most people mean is "rare" — something can be more rare or very rare.
8. Even if you understand the rules and definitions, you'll find it very easy to use the wrong word and never even notice. Some examples:
9. I may be the only one in the world who has this problem, but I find myself transposing "who's" (the contraction for "who is") with "whose" ("the man whose powers include the proportionate strength of an Episcopalian").
10. "Accept" and "except": "I accept what you're telling me, except the part about my hat being on fire."
11. "Affect" and "effect": "Affect" is the verb — remember that the one that starts with the letter "a" is the action word or verb — while "effect" is

- usually used in its noun form. Thus, “The weather affects how we feel, but feeling cheerful on a sunny day is one of the effects of weather.” “Special effects” are things — nouns — so they use the “e” instead of the “a.” That common movie phrase is usually the first thing that pops into my head when I’m double-checking my use of “affect” and “effect.”
12. “Altar” and “alter”: “Altar” is what you see in a church and “alter” means to change. So it’s “alter ego,” not “altar ego,” unless you’re talking about a particularly self-important priest.
 13. “Buses” and “busses,” “busing” and “bussing”: A bus is a big vehicle you ride around in and a buss is a kiss.
 14. “Capital” and “capitol”: You’re pretty safe on this one if you essentially just forget the one with the “o,” which pretty much just means the building that federal or state representatives meet in. Just about all other relevant meanings of the word, including “capital punishment” and “Diltzville is not the capital of Vermont,” are spelled with an “a.”
 15. “Data” and “datum”: Remember that “data” is the plural of “datum.” It sounds awkward, but it should be “the data are conclusive,” not “the data is conclusive.” My preference is to avoid sentences where you have to make the distinction at all: “According to the data, the conclusion is obvious.” That way your sentence is neither technically incorrect nor awkward.
 16. “Eminent” and “imminent”: A distinguished writer is an eminent writer, while an event that’s about to occur is imminent. So it’s “Eminem is an eminent spokesman for rap,” and “Whenever Imogene Coca comes on stage, laughter is imminent.”
 17. “Epitaph” and “epithet”: An epitaph is an inscription honoring a dead person, such as on a tombstone, while an epithet is a usually abusive descriptive phrase, such as something angry motorists might shout at one another. And neither should be confused with a eulogy, which is a speech made in praise of someone.
 18. “Etc.”: Don’t put an “and” in front of “etc.” It’s “super-strength, super-breath, super-ventriloquism, etc.”
 19. “It’s” and “its”: Here are two of the easiest words to confuse. “It’s” is the contraction for “it is” (“It’s a nice day”), while “its” is the possessive of it (“Philadelphia has the ball on its 35-yard line”).
 20. “Lead” and “led”: This is a weird one that’s hard to imagine anyone getting wrong, and yet it’s a pretty common error. We’re so used to “read” being spelled the same whether it’s present tense or past tense (“Read the book now.” “But I read it last week.”) that we sometimes incorrectly extend that pattern to “lead” and “led” (“Moses, lead your people now.” “But I led them last week.”). Part of the reason people want to use “lead” as the past tense of “lead” could be that the kind of “lead” that protects Superman from Kryptonite (“Come on Moses, get the lead out.”) is spelled like the present-tense “lead” and pronounced like the past-tense “led.”
 21. “Loose” and “lose”: We really all know the difference between these two (“My pants are loose, so if I’m not careful, I might lose them.”), but it’s easy to confuse them if you’re not paying attention.
 22. “Media” and “medium”: Remember that “media” is the plural of “medium.” So it’s “The news media are aggressively covering the war,” but “television is a medium that relies on pictures.”
 23. “Plague” and “plaque”: Everybody knows the difference between these two words, but it’s easy to accidentally use one in place of the other. I remember reading a newspaper article where they described a hockey team that was so impressed with the heroic deeds of a player from a rival team that they “presented him with a plague.” Imagine what they’d have done if they *didn’t* like him.
 24. “Principle” and “principal”: For the most part, you’ll be using the “ple” version (“Casserole Man stood up for his principles”), except when you’re talking about Principal Weatherbee at Riverdale High. Back in my grade school days they used to get us to remember this by saying, “The principal is your pal.” “Principal” also means most important, as in “the principal reason we’re here,” which is pretty much the same meaning as the high-school principal, the most important school official.
 25. “Should’ve” instead of “should of”: Here’s a phrase you can think you’re hearing a certain way all of your life, and it turns out what you think you’ve been hearing is wrong. There’s no such phrase “should of,” it’s “should’ve,” the contraction for “should have.” I had the same kind of problem with the phrase “all of a sudden.” I always heard it as “all of the sudden,” and still have trouble saying it the right way. Of course, neither version of that phrase exactly makes literal sense.
 26. “Stationary” and “stationery”: “Stationary” means it doesn’t move. “Stationery” is what you write your letters on. Remember that there are two “e’s” in “letter,” which is related to the stationery with an “e.”
 27. “Then” and “than”: These two are easy to mix up when you’re not concentrating. “Then” involves the timing of an action (“Then he got in the car”), and “than” is the comparative word (“Captain Mammoth is taller than Centipede Man.”).
 28. “There,” “their” and “they’re”: This trio can get mixed up if you’re in too big a hurry. “There” is a place (“I’m going over there.”), “their” is a possessive (“The Eagles still have the ball on their 35-yard line.”) and “they’re” is, of course, the contraction of “they are.”
 29. “To,” “too” and “two”: “To” is what you almost always want to use, but “too” is the one that means also (“...and Toto, too?”) and “two” is, of course, the number.
 30. Be careful also with “weather” (“The weather is sunny today.”) and “whether” (“Whether or not you admit it, there’s a porcupine on your head.”).
 31. Notice that the previous several tips all involve words you can easily use incorrectly and your spell-checker will never notice. And that’s an important

- lesson — spellcheckers are great and you should use them whenever possible, but use them in *addition* to, not in place of, very careful editing.
32. What about when there's more than one acceptable spelling of a word? Use the first or preferred spelling. Don't do what was once the practice at most newspapers and always use the shorter version. That led to frequent use of such awkward spellings as "employe" and "kidnaped."
 33. Now let's get into a list of commonly misspelled words that, if you're lucky, will be intercepted by your spell-checker. But in case you're *not* so lucky, keep an eye out for some of these words, starting out, ironically with:
 34. Misspelled, not misspelled.
 35. Accommodate, not accomodate, accomadate, or any other combination. You can remember this unusual spelling by imaging how the word has to accommodate all those c' and m's.
 36. Amateur, not amature, amatuer, or any other combination.
 37. Argument, not arguement.
 38. Athlete and athletic, not athelete and atheletic.
 39. Conscience, not conscence.
 40. Consciousness, not conscousness, which is useful to know for all those heroes who keep losing theirs.
 41. Dalmatian, not Dalmation.
 42. Disastrous, not disasterous.
 43. Embarrass, not embarass.
 44. Environment, not enviernment.
 45. Existence, not existance.
 46. Exaggerate, not exagerate — remember to exaggerate the number of "g's" in this word.
 47. Fait accompli, not fate accompli.
 48. Fascinating, not fasinating. Memorize this one if there's any chance you'll be writing Mr. Spock dialogue for *Star Trek*.
 49. Harass, not harrass. You can remember this with the rather impolite phrase, "He harassed her ass."
 50. Hemorrhage, not hemmorage, hemmorhage, or any other combination.
 51. Heroes, not heros.
 52. Hors d'oeuvres, a word we've borrowed from the French that perhaps we should give back, since it's next to impossible to spell.
 53. Hypocrite and hypocrisy, which can be very useful words when your characters are clashing spectacularly over vital social issues.
 54. Immediate, not imediate.
 55. For all you Dexter fans, it's laboratory, not labratory.
 56. Lieutenant, not luitenant, liutenent, or any other combination.
 57. Lightning, not lightening.
 58. Medieval, not medievil.
 59. Millennium, not millenium, milenium, or any other combination.
 60. Mischievous, not mischievious.
 61. No one is two words. There is no such word as "noone."
 62. Occur, occurred, occurrence.
 63. Parallel, not paralel, parellel, or any other combination.
 64. Paralyzed, not paralized.
 65. Personnel, not personell.
 66. Phenomenon, not phenonemon or phanomenon or any other combination.
 67. Privilege, not privelege, privlidge, or any other combination.
 68. Receive, not recieve. That old rhyme really explains it: "'I' before 'e' except after 'c,' or when sounded like 'a,' as in neighbor and weigh."
 69. Rhyme, not rhime, rhymne, or any other combination.
 70. Rhythm, not rhythymn or rhythym or rythm or any other combination.
 71. Sabotage, not saboutage.
 72. Sergeant, not sargent.
 73. Sophomore, not sophmore.
 74. Souvenir, not sovenir, souvener, or any other combination.
 75. Surveillance, survalliance.
 76. Suspicious, not suspiscious.
 77. Tomorrow, not tommorow.
 78. Unnecessary, not unecessary or unnecesary or any other combination.
 79. Vengeance, not vengence.
 80. Vicious, not viscious.
 81. Villain, not villian.
 82. There are also a few general rules of grammar to keep in mind, such as keep the noun and subject in agreement. "A stellar lineup of all-star players was introduced," not "were introduced," because the subject of the sentence is "lineup," not "players."
 83. A noun like "team" or "company" is singular, even if it represents something that has many parts. Whereas it's "After all this time, the Eagles still have the ball on their 35-yard line," it's also "the team has the ball on its 35-yard line" or "Philadelphia has the ball on its 35-yard line." The team and Philadelphia are singular nouns, so the verbs need to match.
 84. When you combine pronouns like "me and him" and "you and I," make sure you use the appropriate subject or object form. You can do this by mentally dropping the other pronoun and making sure the sentence still

- sounds natural. So it's "He and I gave the gag gift to her" and "She gave knuckle sandwiches to him and me" because here's how the sentences would sound with only one subject and object per sentence: "He gave the gag gift to her," "I gave the gag gift to her," "She gave a knuckle sandwich to him" and "She gave a knuckle sandwich to me."
85. In general, keep it simple. Avoid wordiness. If you can say something in fewer words and it's just as effective, go with fewer words.
 86. Know the basic parts of speech — noun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, conjunction, etc. There are tapes and DVDs of *Schoolhouse Rock* out there that can help you painlessly brush up on this stuff if you're not good at it. Without this basic knowledge, it's hard to follow this or any other discussion of basic writing skills.
 87. Once you understand noun-verb/subject-predicate construction, use it a lot and give many of your sentences simple, straightforward subject-predicate structure. But also include plenty of other sentence types to keep your writing varied and interesting.
 88. Keep your writing active, not passive. Don't say, "The Human Wart was punched by Captain Shifter-Lever," say, "Captain Shifter-Lever punched the Human Wart."
 89. Use active verbs and avoid passive verbs like "was" and "had." Instead of "Parcheesi Pete had the most arrests of any super-hero," say "Parcheesi Pete collected the most arrests of any super-hero," or better yet, "Parcheesi Pete arrested more criminals than any other super-hero."
 90. Be careful in your comparisons. Make sure you're saying what's actually being compared. "Drainspout Man has captured as many crooks as the Deadly Pheasant" isn't really correct — the Deadly Pheasant is only one person, and Drainspout Man has presumably caught a lot more crooks than that. What you're really saying is "Drainspout Man has captured as many crooks as has the Deadly Pheasant."
 91. Always watch out for repetition of favorite words. If you suspect you're using a word too often, use your computer to do a word search and find out for sure.
 92. Avoid clichés. Phrases like "tried and true," "few and far between," "in this day and age," "kinder, gentler," and "tell it like it is" have lost their impact due to over-use. When phrases reach this state, you can get more effective use out of them by giving them an imaginative twist: "He's the kind of reporter who tells it like it isn't."
 93. Put your work down for a while, then some time later read it fresh, really keeping an eye out for missing words. As you're writing, you know what you want to say, but sometimes not all the words get down on the page. It also helps to read your work both on the computer screen and on paper — sometimes an omission that you miss in one form will jump out at you in the other.
 94. Likewise, keep an eye out for missing punctuation. If Captain Fish-Head calls out, "Who's with me?" and the Municipal Avengers respond, "We all are Captain Fish-Head," the meaning is lost without the necessary comma after "are."
 95. Use punctuation judiciously. There are a zillion rules that tell you when you should and shouldn't use commas, but it's probably easiest to just use your discretion and put them in when natural pauses occur and when the sentence wouldn't be clear without one.
 96. Hyphens: When you've got an adjective phrase that uses more than one word to describe what's essentially a single idea, a hyphen is often appropriate. So it would be a red-kryptonite ray, a sleep-inducing drug, and 30th-century customs. But don't put a hyphen in an adjective phrase if the first word is an adverb (an "ly" word). So it's no hyphen for "massively powerful pistons" and "badly needed relief."
 97. Keep a good dictionary close by and use it to confirm spellings, definitions, and appropriate usages.
 98. Get a good grammar book. My wife has a book left over from her college days called the *Harbrace College Handbook* by John C. Hodges and Mary E. Whitten from Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., and it's extremely useful, if a little dated.
 99. There are a few rules I urge you *not* to worry about: For example, some people say you're not supposed to split infinitives. An infinitive is the form of a verb such as "to go," "to do," or "to light one's hat on fire." There's some thinking that you're not supposed to split up that construction, as in this case: "It's not a good idea to carelessly light one's hat on fire." These people would prefer that you say "It's not a good idea to light one's hat on fire carelessly." In fact, there's really not a compelling reason to avoid split infinitives. The rule apparently originated because in Latin, infinitives *can't* be split, and some people want the logical constructions of Latin to extend to modern English. It's a noble thought, but hardly a reason to rearrange your sentences.
 100. Starting a sentence with a conjunction. Words like "and," "but," and "or" are conjunctions, and some people don't want you starting sentences with them. But they're so darn useful for starting sentences in the natural way we speak and communicate; I don't adhere to that restriction at all. And I felt forever vindicated in this decision when I noticed the highly erudite Garrison Keillor beginning his daily public-radio feature *The Writer's Almanac* with the words "...And here is the *Writer's Almanac* for Monday, April 21..."
 101. Ending a sentence with a preposition. Prepositions are words like "in, over, around, above, of, with, about," etc. and some say you're not supposed to end a sentence with them. So supposedly, "That's who I'm going to the prom with" should be "That's with whom I'm going to the prom." Obviously, this can lead to some really awkward sentences for no logical reason. In other words, if someone says you shouldn't end a sentence with a preposition, he doesn't know what about which he's talking.

reach Tom at:
bierbaum@bluelinepro.com

Letters Forum

All letters received will be considered for publication. Letters published will be done so as received in regards to spelling, punctuation, etc. – however, letters may be edited for length, language, and/or other considerations. All letters should be signed by the writer, as well as including the writer's legibly printed name, address, and contact numbers (phone, fax, e-mail). Opinions expressed are those of their respective letter writers, and not necessarily shared by Blue Line. While open as a critical forum, it is Blue Line's hope and intention that correspondence maintains constructive and positive elements of criticism. Simple name calling, rumor mongering, and/or maliciousness is not of interest. Unless our editor does it.

Please send your e-mail missives to sketchletters@bluelinepro.com. With all letters, please state clearly if you wish to have your address in print. We look forward to hearing from you.

Dear Publisher,

I bought Sketch issue #16 with J. Scott Campbell. It was very informative I didn't know you could start at such a young age.

I myself am 17 and everyone tells me I'm a very good artist but, I don't know how to go about getting to draw my own comics. I have always wanted to be a comic book artist since I picked up my first comic.

I was wondering if you could give me any info on how I could become a comic artist. I was thinking about going to art school but I don't know if they would teach me about comic style art. I have been drawing since I was 2 years of age.

How can I get in contact with any art studios? Or can I work from home like Jeff Campbell? Thank you for your magazine, also thanks for your time.

Sincerely,
Shane Dingier

Dear Shane,

You're seventeen already? Get working!

Just kidding. Shane, you're never too young (or too old, for that matter) to start drawing. Many comic artists and writers, like artists in other fields, started at a very early age. But you can be too young and inexperienced to jump right into the comic field. I'm glad to hear you enjoy drawing so much, and while there are good schools out there that specialize in comics, I would suggest that you think about going to a school that provides you with training and knowledge for fields and interests beyond comics.

At seventeen, you have lots of decisions to make about things. What else do you like? Movies? Computers? Animation? Comics is a niche market at the moment, and while it can be a great way to make a living it would be good to consider some other interests if you're thinking about future schooling. You can read about ways to develop your skills, and business practices to help you put them to practical use, in every issue of Sketch. Talk to your friends, family, and teachers about your schooling before you make a decision.

The best advice I can offer to you right now is to look at and draw from things beyond comics. Get yourself a small sketchbook, notebook, or something that you can tote around with you all the time, and draw what you see around you in it. Do as much "real life" sketching as you can – you can never do enough right now. The things you learn when drawing from life will help you with your comic art, as well as related fields.

Keep working at your comics, but keep in mind there are other fields you might like that

share many of your comic –related interests and where you can use your drawing talent. Let us know how that sketching is coming, and we can offer you all the information you'll need in the future. Good luck.

Flint

My name is Alexander Stewart and I need some help. I can draw a little and I have a vivid imagination, however the things I think of I have a hard time drawing because it's hard for me to put them on the paper. For example, I like to draw women but I have a problem getting the body structure together, the only thing I know is that I like women with a nice figure. I resort to looking in swimsuit books to get the poses that I want but I feel like I'm cheating. Are there any books that specifically tell you how to draw females? I can draw males just fine (kinda). Secondly I'm thinking of a trading card game. I'm presently coming up with the characters as I read the Bible but I know there is an easier way via the computer. I don't have Adobe PhotoShop or a scanner. I saw a commercial on television (I think a Campbell's Soup commercial) and it showed a lady designing dresses on this program. The strange thing though is that she had a digital drawing pad with one of those digital drawing pens. I don't know if it's like drawing on paper, but do you know the name of the program? Also if you can suggest to me what art programs I can use to make comic books and card games I would sure appreciate it. Thank you for your time.

Alexander J. Stewart

Dear Alexander,

It sounds like you have the problem that most artists readily encounter – the things you think of you have a hard time drawing! I don't mean to joke; most artists work endlessly trying to put the imagery from their imaginations or the world they see around them down on paper – or now, digitally – the way they want. As we always stress, it will take plenty of practice and hard work, there's simply no way around it. Even if you go the computer route, there is plenty to learn...though you might not have to develop your drawing skills as much if you don't wish, as you can rely on various 3D modeling programs.

Drawing attractive women is going to be a necessity for you in the comics field, just like learning basics such as perspective and lighting...only you might find that it is even more work. Artists often have trouble spots – subjects they find particularly troublesome to

put down convincingly. For some it's kids or horses, others find that the ultra-attractive women demanded by the medium can be one of the most difficult things to learn. Taste in comic book babes and your favorite artists of them is certainly subjective, and might depend on the type of art you favor; manga, "realistic," or silver-age retro flavored stylings. Many comic artists can easily draw nifty, "comic-cute" babes that prove quite adequate and serviceable. But there's a lot more to it than being able to knockout the requisite stock poses and expressions. Drawing truly knock-out comic females, learning how to draw them from any angle and convey their range of expressions with convincing ability is a school unto itself, and some talents just wildly excel in this particular area and make it their own. Master the art of drawing the female form, and you will be on your way to becoming a comic book star. You'll want to check out work by the fantastic Frank Cho or Adam Hughes immediately, two gents that draw some of the most attractive women you'll currently find on a comic shelf.

There are other great comic artists to look at, of course – and in addition, you should definitely be looking at great illustrators that are not in the comics field. Enjoy 'em, love 'em, – but always look beyond just the field of comics when learning how to draw. Study and draw from photos – don't ever think you're cheating, as you mentioned. The one thing that beats drawing from photo reference, however, is drawing from life – sketch your friends and family whenever you can in natural poses in everyday life. If your situation allows, have your friends pose for you – if they complain they have to sit or stand in one place too long ("hold that pose!"), consider taking your own photos. Look, study, sketch, and learn. It will take time, but if you put the work in, it will pay off.

I'm not familiar with the TV commercial you mentioned, but the tool you're asking about may be a Wacom Tablet. We'll be doing an article on it and some figure programs in an upcoming issue. But for now, from the sounds of your letter, I will suggest that you sketch and work more on paper for the moment. It's more economical than the scanner and programs, and right now will help you develop your "eye" and basic skills for figure work. The computer tools and programs will come, right now try working on your basics before you move on, you're going to need them. Don't get discouraged, do some sketching, and we wish you luck.

Flint

Hey,

I wanted to color my artwork like in comics with the same type of coloring, but my question is what do they use? Water colors, or colored pencils or maybe something else?

Jason Kennedy

Jason,

Most comics are colored on a computer using PhotoShop. Here in the studio we still do some color roughs using markers, but most of the time we do our work in PhotoShop.

Bob H.

Hello Mr. Hickey,

I'm writing because I figured any business man out there is interested in the comments of their customers, right? Well, I excitedly subscribed to your magazine, Sketch, roughly a year ago and eagerly looked forward to the coming issues. I did enjoy some aspects of the publication but I have to say, it was not at all what I expected for the almost \$40 I handed over. To be honest, I felt a little cheated at the fact that what was promoted as a resource for aspiring artists and comic book fans was mostly a catalog to sell your art materials. Now, I don't know about you, but a \$37 catalog with a few good articles in it does not, in my opinion, a good magazine make. In addition to that, I think the interviews seem a lot like filler at times. If you want it to be an interview magazine, then make it one, but what I was really hoping for was a majority of valuable articles more in the "how to" and "tips" from the pros' area. I think you've got some very talented contributors in that respect but they don't seem to be given the room they deserve in your magazine and definitely are clouded by the immense amount of catalog pages.

Obviously I am but one reader with my own opinion and as they say, you can't please all of the people all of the time, so I would understand if this is pretty much disregarded. I work in the design industry so I am also very aware of the cost of putting something like Sketch together, printing it and distributing it to a wide audience. I'm sure your advertisers are not as affluent or numerous as in other markets either. My only hope is that you strive to reverse the content to catalog ratio and give us readers more of what we really want.

I do admire your efforts to promote the comic book industry and I will continue to buy materials from you but I will not re-subscribe and I'll keep my \$37 to buy more comics, thank you.

Sincerely,
Shane

Shane,

You work in the design industry, so it's a sure bet you realize advertising is the only way that a publication survives. We don't have many outside advertisers, so our catalogue pulls a double duty by helping to support the magazine as well as provide a service to our readers. We understand your concern. We've covered this topic before, but I'm glad to do so again out of interest to you and our other readers.

Without the catalog we couldn't have Sketch magazine, but Sketch does not exist for the catalogue. Our alternative is no Sketch, and simply

making the catalogue available for purchase off the shelf or by mail like other comic and art suppliers. Many sketch readers make use of the catalogue, which contains specialized tools and supplies for Sketch's specific market, many not readily available in comic shops and art stores

We do our best to say "thanks," and help our customers out the best way we can:

The cost of a subscription is \$35.70, with that you receive a \$15.00 discount coupon for any catalog purchase as well as a 15% discount on all art supply purchases. We also offer a free classified to you for each issue that you are a subscriber. If you are buying materials from us, I hope you are enjoying the savings on the items you have ordered and that it helps compensate you for feeling "cheated" on the magazine itself.

I certainly respect your opinion, but naturally I don't agree about the interviews or articles. Our articles vary in size and complexity for a variety of reasons, and we're always trying to offer something new. This issue and last, for instance, we've done two short and informative overviews of cover creators, instead of our usual interviews. We'll see how reader and retailer reaction goes. This issue we're also doing how-to's on some tools and comic basics that often aren't touched upon, or passed over quickly.

I'm sorry you feel cheated, Shane, you're one of the few. But I'm glad you let us know. We encourage everyone to let us know what he or she thinks, pro or con. I hope some of our experimentation is more to your liking, and that you'll at least continue to check us out from time to time.

Thanks,
Bob H.

Hello Chris.

My name is Bjornar Faxvaag, and I am a Norwegian that has lived in Houston, TX for 6 years. I love cartoons and just started to draw a few weeks ago. I bought a couple of starter books. (Harp & Robin Hall) I read your article online about Digital Coloring, and I have tried out your method. http://www.bluelinepro.com/pastarticles_digcolor1.htm

What is the next step if I want to learn more about digital coloring? I have some problems if I use the paintbrush function in PhotoShop. It is difficult to keep inside of the lines; do you have a trick here?

Do you have any other recommendations for books, tools, SW etc.? What about digital tablet? I have looked at Wacom Intuos2 6x8 Graphics Tablet and the Wacom Graphire2 4x5. What do you recommend?

Best regards,
Bjornar Faxvaag

Hi Bjornar,

Chris isn't with us anymore but let me take a stab at it.

You may want to check out Digital Colors for Comics by Aaron Hubrich. This book offers all kind of information on Coloring and using PhotoShop.

As far as the size of the Tablet...If the budget allows it - Bigger is better for sure. You can start out with a tablet for around \$100. The

larger one's will cost \$300 or more, but are really nice because of their sensitivity.

Thanks!
Bob H.

Greetings; a kudo and a question to you folks

I've been purchasing Sketch since issue 1, and am happy to see that after some unsure early steps your publication has settled down into a solid, informative missive. Makes me wonder what the industry might look like today if Sketch had come into existence 10 years ago.

Which leads me to my question on scanning: I've noted and followed the usually recommended instructions for scanning b/w line work at 600 dpi as a BMP, and reducing the resolution to 300 dpi, and the image size back down to the original dimensions. (I use a Microtech scanner). What I have found is an annoying tendency for fine line aspects to *close up* as solid blacks, and curved lines to be somewhat jagged. The end result doesn't look like it would be suitable to print.

I gather this has something to do with the threshold setting (I believe the scanner software has a fixed default setting).

I tried a modification by scanning Grayscale, and using Corel Photopaint to manually adjust a threshold of about 147 to black and 148 to white. It yields a marginally better result, but an elegant process it isn't.

Am I likely making some basic mistake in the process. Any suggestions will be greatly appreciated.

Keep up the excellent work.
Steve Souza

Steve,

Sounds like you have a firm grasp on trouble shooting and experimenting. Getting the best scan is always a big concern. It sounds like you may be reducing the image twice...What I mean is, it sounds like you scan the image in at 600 dpi, rez it down to 300, and then reduce it again to its final size. That last step may be causing some unwanted pixels to pop in - making your line fuzzier. I'm guessing, so don't hold me to it ..

I scan the image at full size (11" x 17") and then rez it down to 300 dpi, but I keep the 11" x 17" dimensions. Once it's down to its final size (300 dpi), I then switch the mode to grayscale, then RGB (or CMYK). You can also make your image the final print size but keep the resolution to 400 dpi. Either one of these formulas work very well.

By keeping the original 11" x 17" page size, it allows the line to be smooth when it finally hits the paper. The other advantage is if you want to make posters or oversize prints: an 11" x 17" at 300 dpi blows up real nice!

Scanning your work in grayscale is cool if you like to fiddle around with thresholds and what not. This may be needed when you're just working with pencils. But if you just work with solid line art, I would suggest scanning in using the scanner's bitmap or line art setting. This saves a step or two in the end.

Hope this helps!

Aaron

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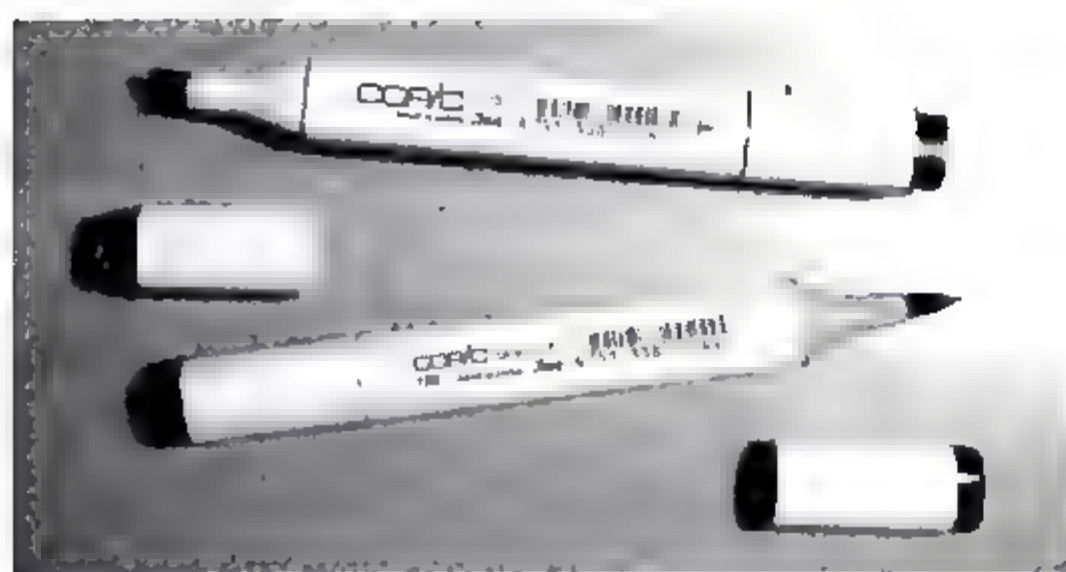
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Copic Markers

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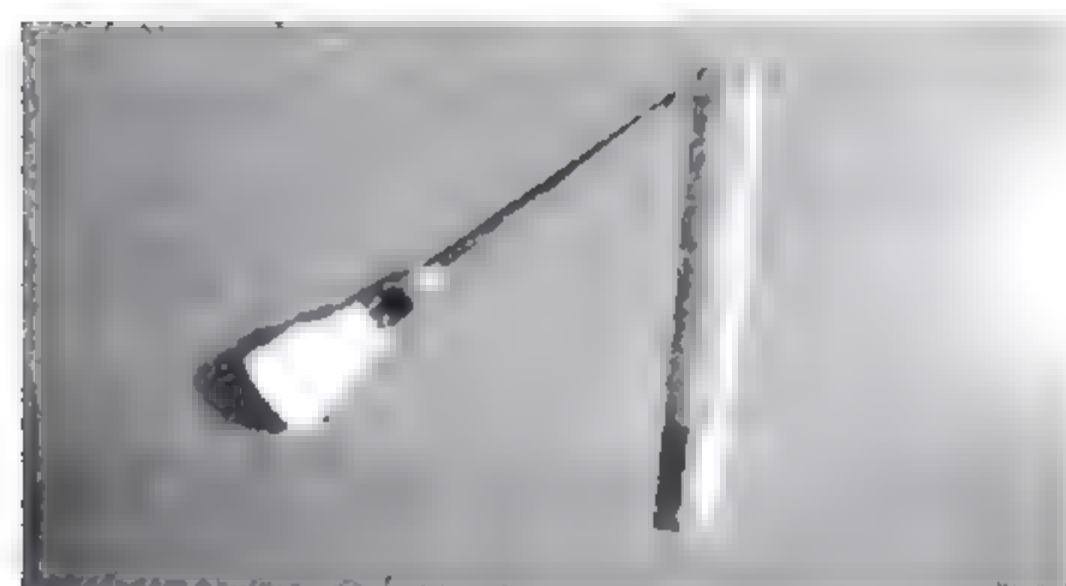
by Bob Hickey



Copic's two types of markers. Standard and Brush



A bottle of Copic's Various Ink



Cap and needle for Various Ink bottles.

If you are a marker user, you'll find the Copic brand offers useful and unusual features. There are two basic types of Copic Markers; a standard square barrel marker and a round barrel brush marker. As most brands, each marker type has two different nibs, the standard broad tip and a thinner brush tip. Copic offers a wide range of vibrant colors to rival other market brands, with good nib sturdiness. But the greatest advantage you will find with Copic markers over other brands is that they can be rebuilt. What do I mean by that?

As most marker users know, one of the worst things is having your markers dry out on you in the middle of a project. Sometimes you can't find the exact replacement you need at your store right when you need it, and not everyone lays in a large supply of a particular color – how many people do you know that have a shoebox full of chameleon green, or even extras of marker artist necessities like gray scales? Sure, you can try and recharge them – but how convenient is that when you're in the middle of a wet project with a pressing deadline at 2:00AM?

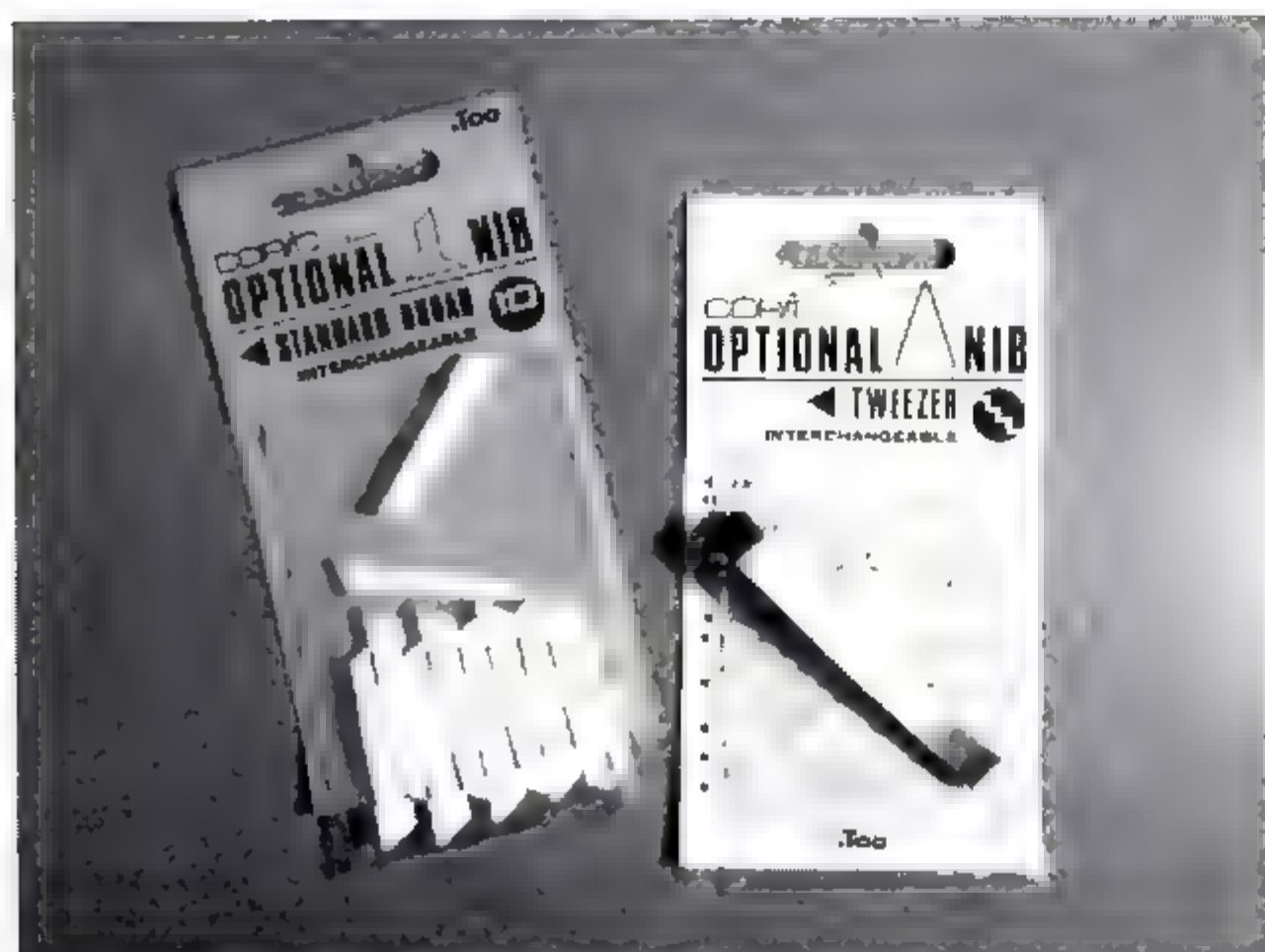
The special thing about Copic Markers is that you can refill them with the Copic Various Ink. Copic Various Inks are color-coded and numbered to match with the specific markers to make sure that you refill each marker with the same exact color. The Various Ink bottles have a tip that makes refilling simple, but to even make it easier Copic offers a handy screw-on cap that has a special needle attached. The needle inserts into the marker and doesn't allow for spillage. A bottle of Various Ink can refill a marker three to five times, depending on its type. Of the two types of markers (the standard square barrel markers and the

oval sketch marker) the square barrel holds more ink than the sketch marker.

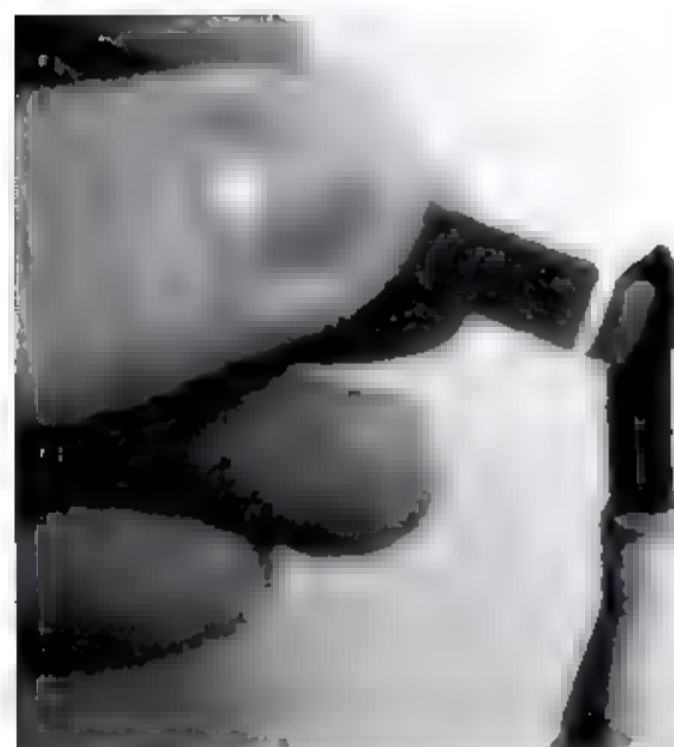
We each know how the tips of used markers start to wear out. They bend over and lose their edges. Copic offers Copic Optional Nibs (replacement tips). These nibs can be easily inserted into your hard-used marker using Copic's Optional Nib Tweezers. Just take the small tweezers and pull out the used nib. Take the new nib and insert it into the barrel of your marker. Place the marker standing up, with the new nib down, to start the ink flow. The only drawback is that replacing nibs can use a little extra ink. You may want to go ahead and add more ink after inserting a new Optional Nib to top off your color.

There are always marker artists out there who can never find just the right color marker for that special project right off the rack – if they want it, they must achieve it by building or blending various markers. Copic offers empty marker barrels and empty Various ink storage bottles – with a little work and experimentation you can mix the various inks to give you the specific color you've always wanted, readily available and ready to go. Just make a note of the inks and proportions of each you are mixing, and mix an amount of ink depending on your projected need of your custom color, as it may be time-consuming to mix another batch to match that exact color again. Time is always money when you're doing commercial work.

While many are staunch Photoshopers these days, there are some incredible illustrators in the comic field using markers. With these special features, Copic offers artists a terrific way to "rebuild" their tools and avoid dry-outs, last minute duds, and plain "dead" markers. If you are a marker user you'll want to check this brand out and see if it suits your taste – you'll find them as useful as that shoebox full of fresh emergency markers during a critical project, but more economical, less space consuming, and far more convenient.



Copic's Optional Nibs and Tweezers.



Pulling out an old or worn nib using Copic's Optional Tweezers.



Adding ink to a standard Copic marker. Be careful to not overfill the barrel of the marker.



Inserting a new Copic Optional Nib.



A newly "rebuilt" Copic Marker – all ready to fill in those blacks! "X" away!

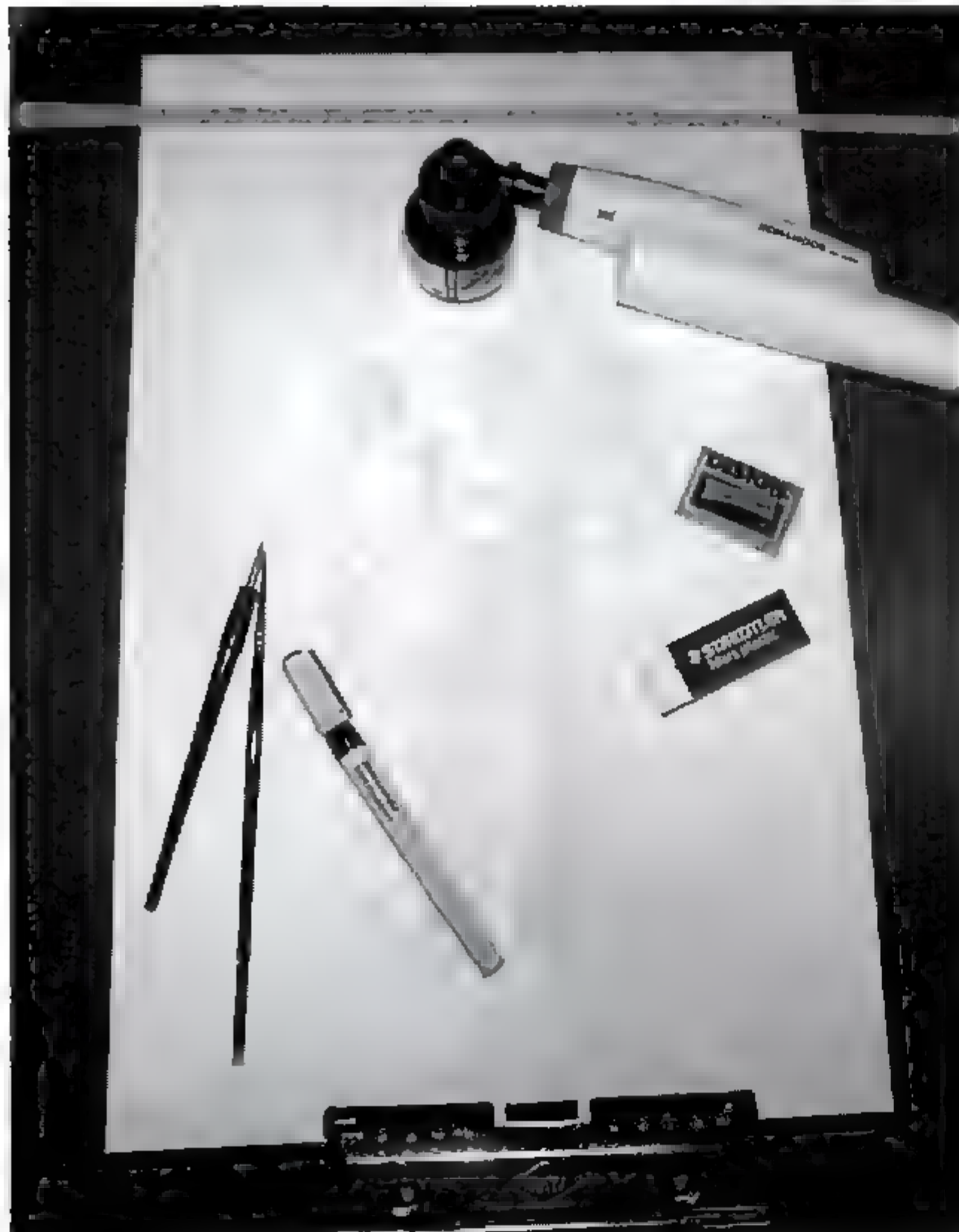
FW - BLACK?

FW Black Acrylic Artist Ink

by Bob Hickey

FW offers one of the premiere whiteout inks currently available on the stores shelves. It is a well known comic artist's staple; many inkers pick it up and make it their whiteout of choice upon word-of-mouth without ever trying another brand. It's terrific for correcting mistakes and making effects, and most feel it lives up to its good reputation. But maybe because the whiteout is so widely recommended, we noticed that a number of artists don't realize that FW also offers their own brand of black ink. A steadfast FW white-out user, I decided to run the FW Acrylic Black through a few paces to see if it holds up as well as its polar opposite.

The label states that the ink is water-resistant, a must for comic book inkers. It states that the ink is non-clogging which is important if you are using it for tech pens; and that it is pigmented, meaning solid black. The label also shows outline shapes of an airbrush, dip brush, tech pen, and a quill pen, which I take as indicating that the ink works well with all of these tools. Before using any inks or whiteout you'll need to shake them up. This helps to stir the pigment that has settled to the bottom of the respective jar.



Tools...

I'll be working with a brush, Hunts 102 quill pen, and a Koh-i-noor rapidograph technical pen - no airbrush this time out, I haven't had to use an airbrush in years with Photoshop.



Artwork...

For ink test purposes, I've quickly penciled a three character group shot on a piece of Blue Line Pro's Premiere 400 series (strathmore) smooth 3 ply board. This is the same paper that Image Comics uses. Each figure is penciled differently. The center figure is fully rendered with all blacks filled in with HB lead, the figure to the left was penciled but the blacks were not pencil-filled in; I placed "X's" where I wanted to place my solid blacks, and the third figure on the right was penciled with non-photo blue and HB lead. I filled in a few solid areas with the non-photo blue to see if the ink will adhere to the paper under the non-photo blue lead.

Important ink qualities we will be checking for in our run-through:

- Adherence to the paper.
- Do the solid black areas stay black when the ink dries.
- Erasing close to the line during cleanup to see if the ink erases off the page.
- Using whiteout on the ink to cleanup mistakes and add effects.
- Drying time in the pens and brushes.

Let's go...Before using any ink or whiteout you'll need to shake them up. This helps to stir the pigment that has settled to the bottom of the respective jar.



I first filled my trusty old Koh-i-noor tech pen with FW black ink. The ink is fairly thin, which should work well with a technical pen.

In this photo I have outlined and lettered using the tech



pen. Once the pen was primed with ink it flowed very well. I have noticed that the ink lays on top of the art board instead of being absorbed into the board. (For those of you that might wonder: yes, these days I would do most of the lettering on the computer, and not by hand.

Tech pen ****

Next I pulled out my Hunts 102 quill pen. Again the ink



flowed smoothly. No problems with pooling or drying on the nib tip. I did notice that the ink tends to dry very slowly, so you must be careful not to lay your hand (or tools, eraser dust, or anything else) around the inked area like I did – something you should be careful of all the time, for that matter.

102 quill pen *** (Only because of the slow drying.)

Using a #1 Winsor & Newton Series 7 brush I contin-



ued to ink the figures and fill in the solid black areas. This is where the type of pencil may make a difference.

The figure on the left with only the outline and "X's" to indicate fully black areas required me to go over the open areas twice with the ink. I didn't have to wait for the first stroke to dry, which was nice and saved time.

Filling in the black areas on the figure in the middle, in which the areas were fully filled in with graphite, was a little harder. The graphite wants to keep the ink from adhering to the board, and this is a problem faced with most inks. This wasn't as troublesome as some ink brands I've used. As with the first figure I found myself going over the solid areas twice, but again didn't have to wait for dry time.

Now to our non-photo blue-penciled figure on the right of the test pencils. Usually non-photo blue will play the devil with your inks, but the FW black ink worked great. I found this with the other two figures as well: because of the property of laying on top on the paper – rather than being immediately absorbed - the ink flowed across the non-photo blue graphite work and only took one coat to cover the solid areas.

Brush ****



Now the inks are finished, and it's time to clean up the artwork with an eraser. I tried a variety of erasers commonly found in comic artists' studios to see what would happen.

The figure on the left I tried cleaning with a kneaded eraser. No problems, the ink stayed on the board and had no lightening of edgework where the eraser hit the ink.

Kneaded eraser ****

Using a Staedtler Mars plastic eraser to clean the middle figure wasn't much different than using the kneaded eraser. Again the ink stayed nicely applied with no lifting, flaking, or light edges.

Staedtler Mars plastic eraser ****



I tried a Koh-i-noor electric eraser to clean up the figure on the right. I used the electric eraser lightly and evenly across the inked figure. I had no problem cleaning the thin lined areas, but when I touched a solid filled area the electric eraser did remove some ink.

Koh-i-noor electric eraser ***

The art is cleaned up but I need to white out a few things. Finally, let's see how the FW white out works on its brand compatriot. I found that the FW whiteout worked out as great on the FW Acrylic Black Ink as it does on its competitors. Whether on a small line or over a solid black area, the clean up went very smoothly. I was able to thicken lines and cover most any area with only one stroke.

FW white-out ****

As always, you should try a couple different types of any material to see how it fits with your individual needs and tastes - but I'll be using the FW Acrylic Black ink the next time I need to ink a new project. It was as much a pleasure to use as the favored FW whiteout, with my only slight glitch being the ink's somewhat slower drying time. You might want to add the FW "salt and pepper" to your artist's table for your next inked project.

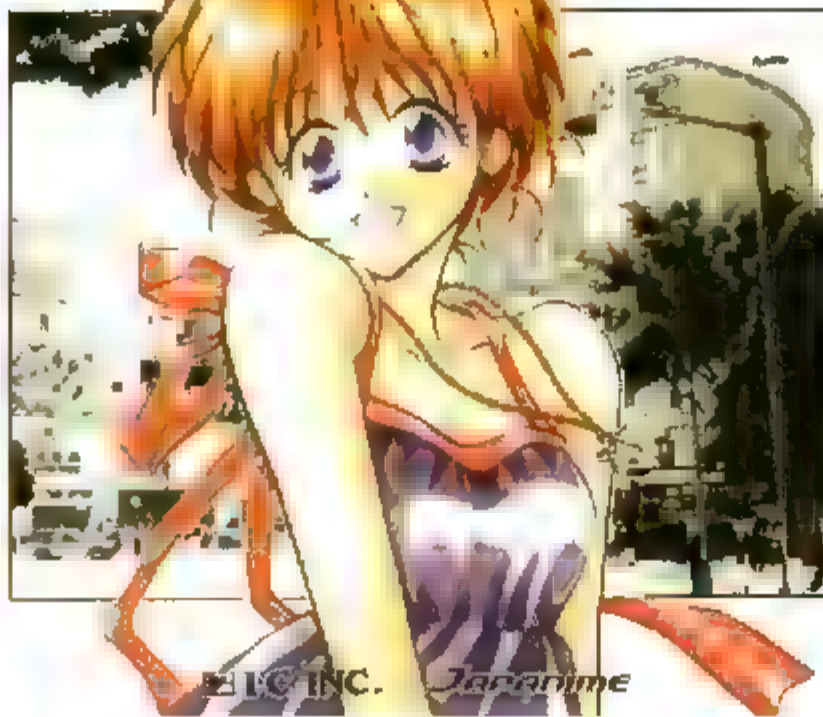
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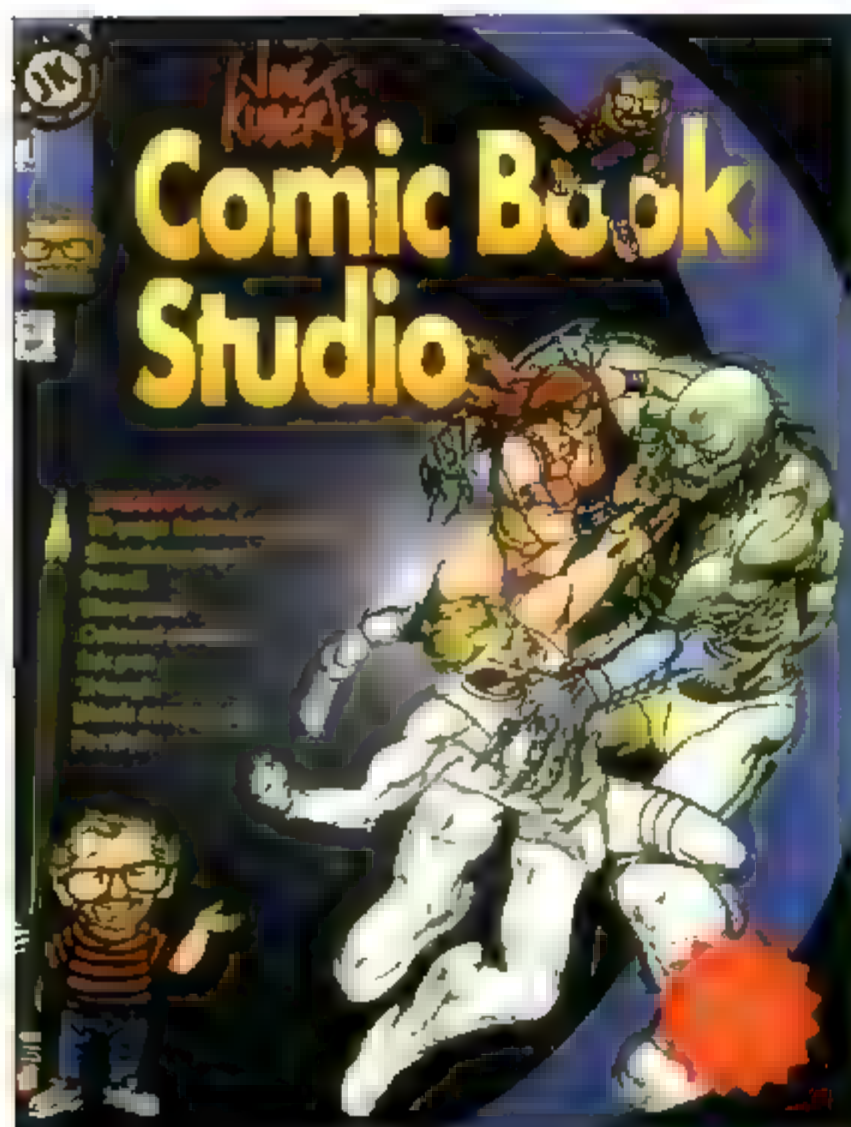
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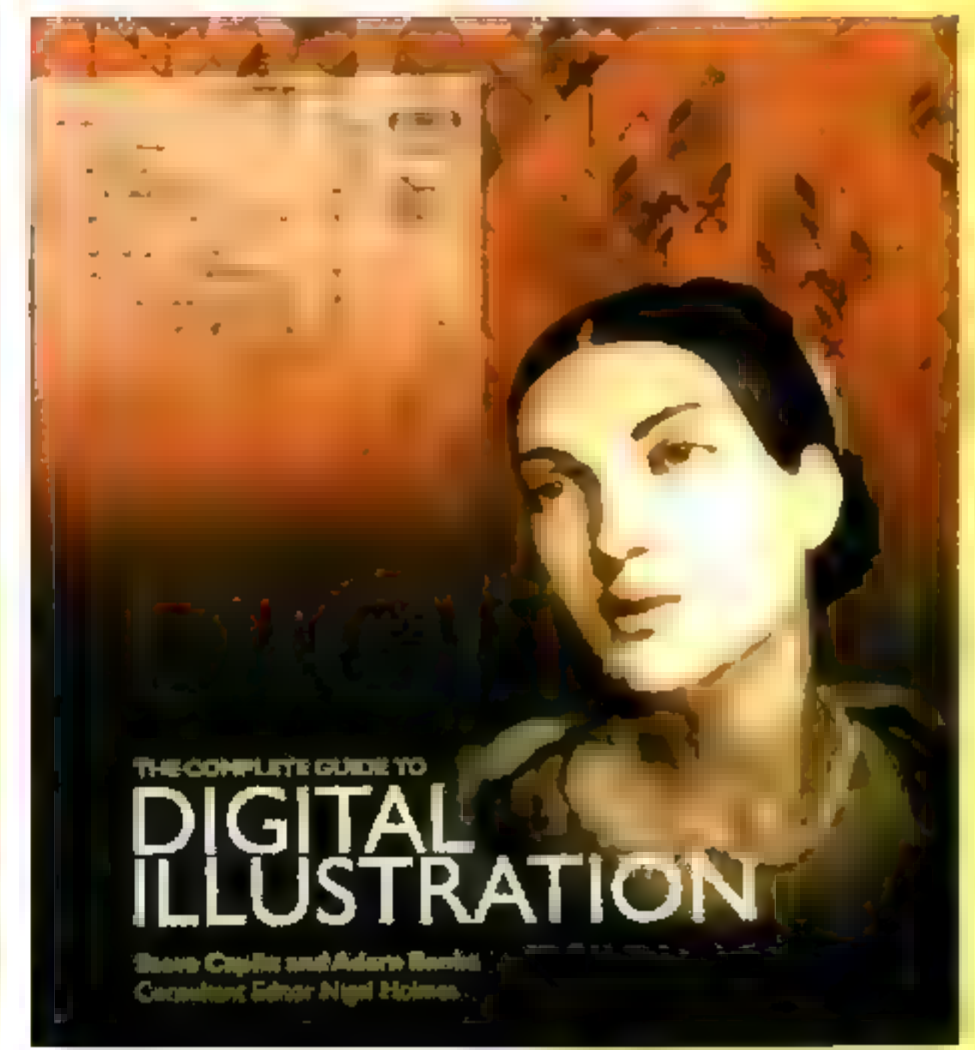
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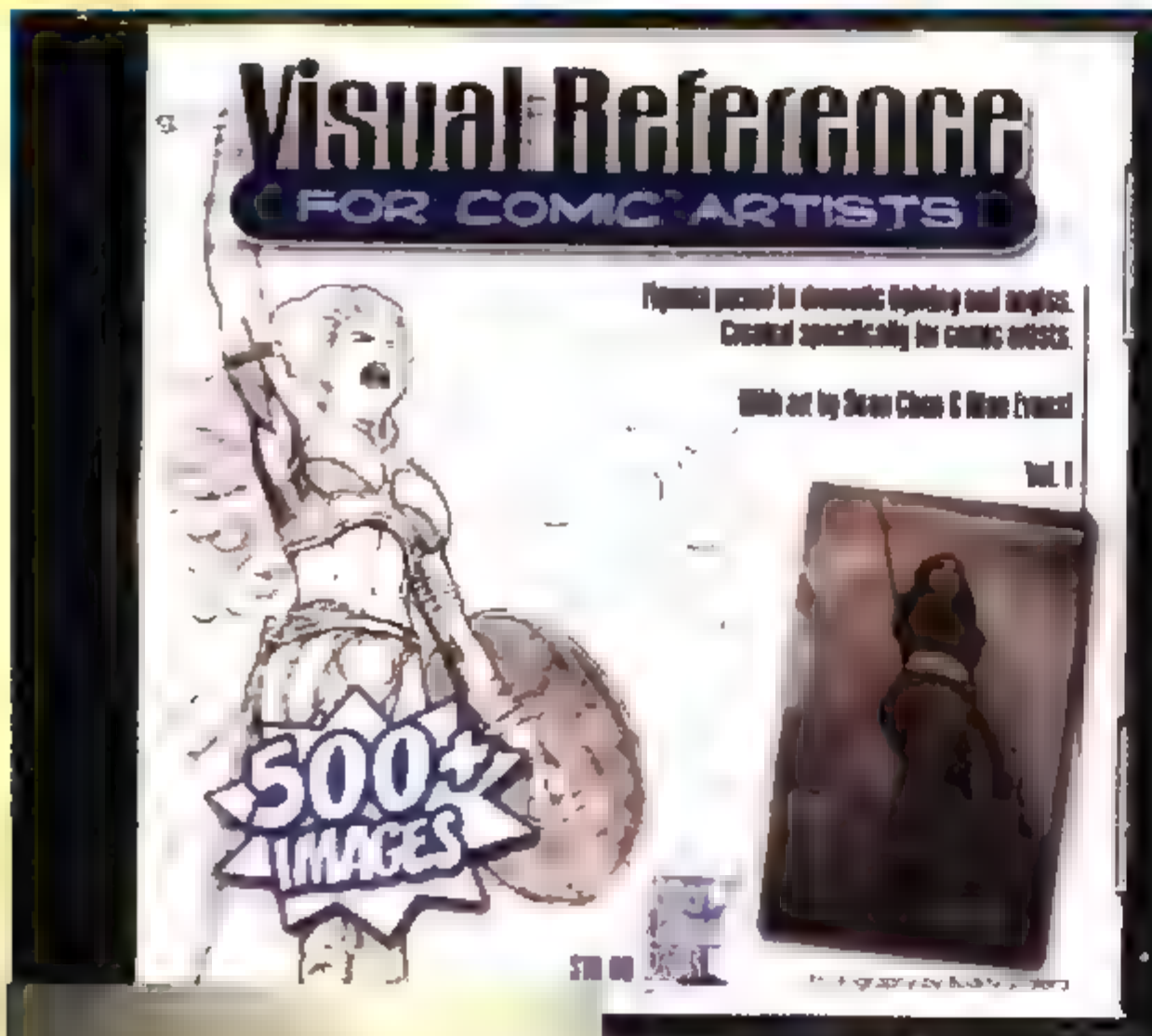


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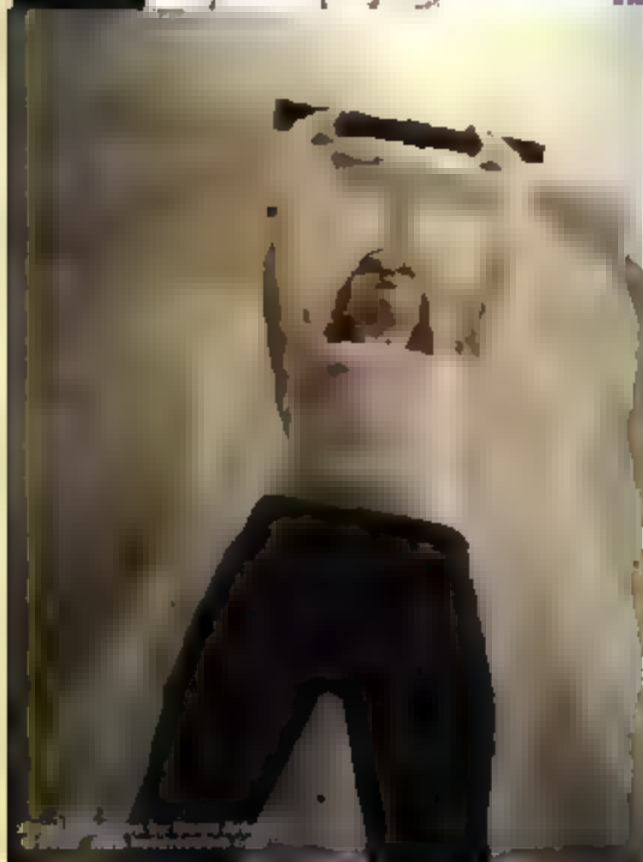
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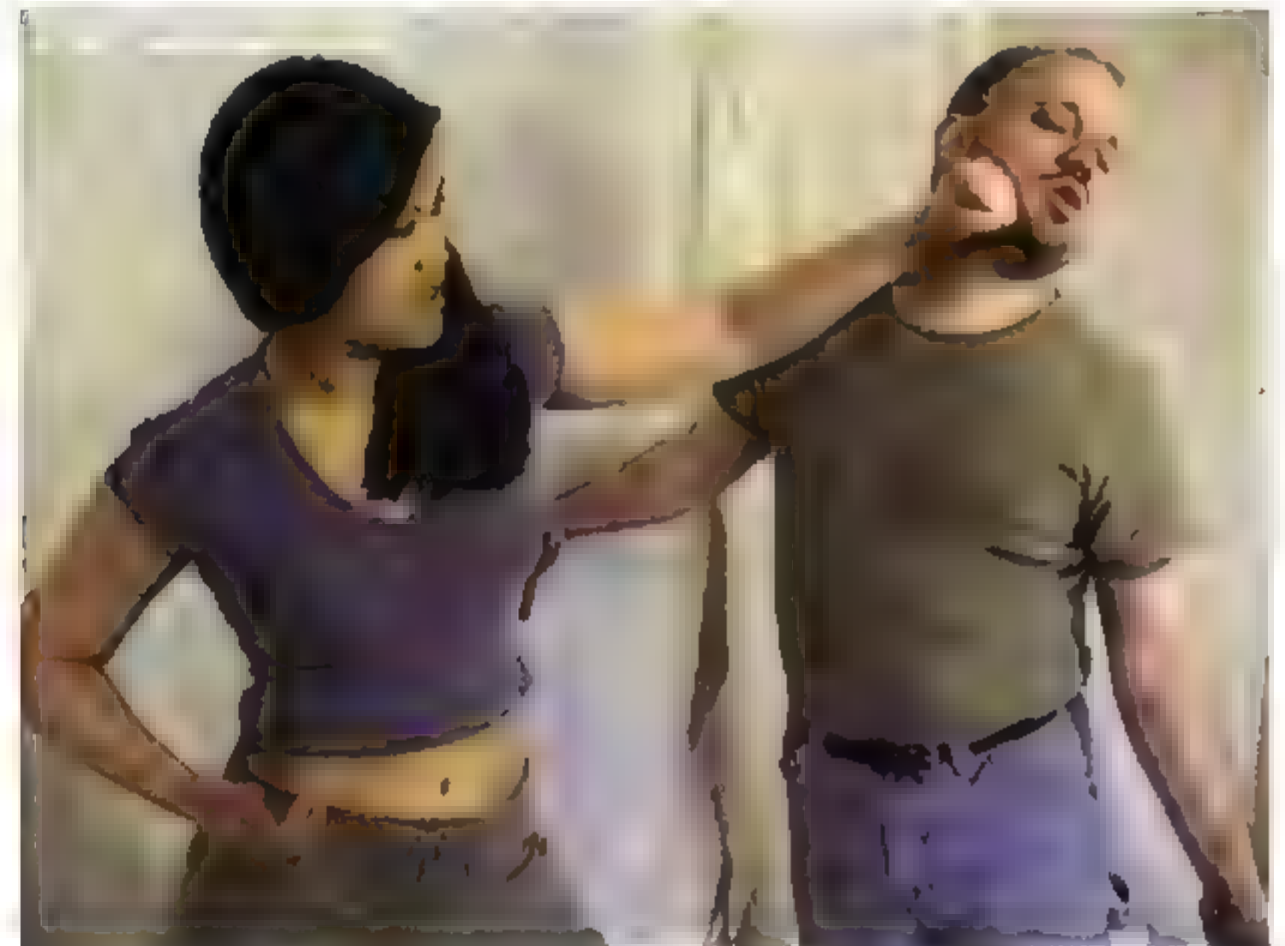
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\$10.00

This disk uses Internet Explorer or Netscape as a preview program. This means you don't have to have an expensive design program. Most computers have either Explorer or Netscape on them to view the internet. The full color photos look to be useful and creatively shot.



Coming soon
VISUAL REFERENCE
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vol. 2



CAT 7" Manikin and DOG 6 1/2" Manikin by Art Alternatives

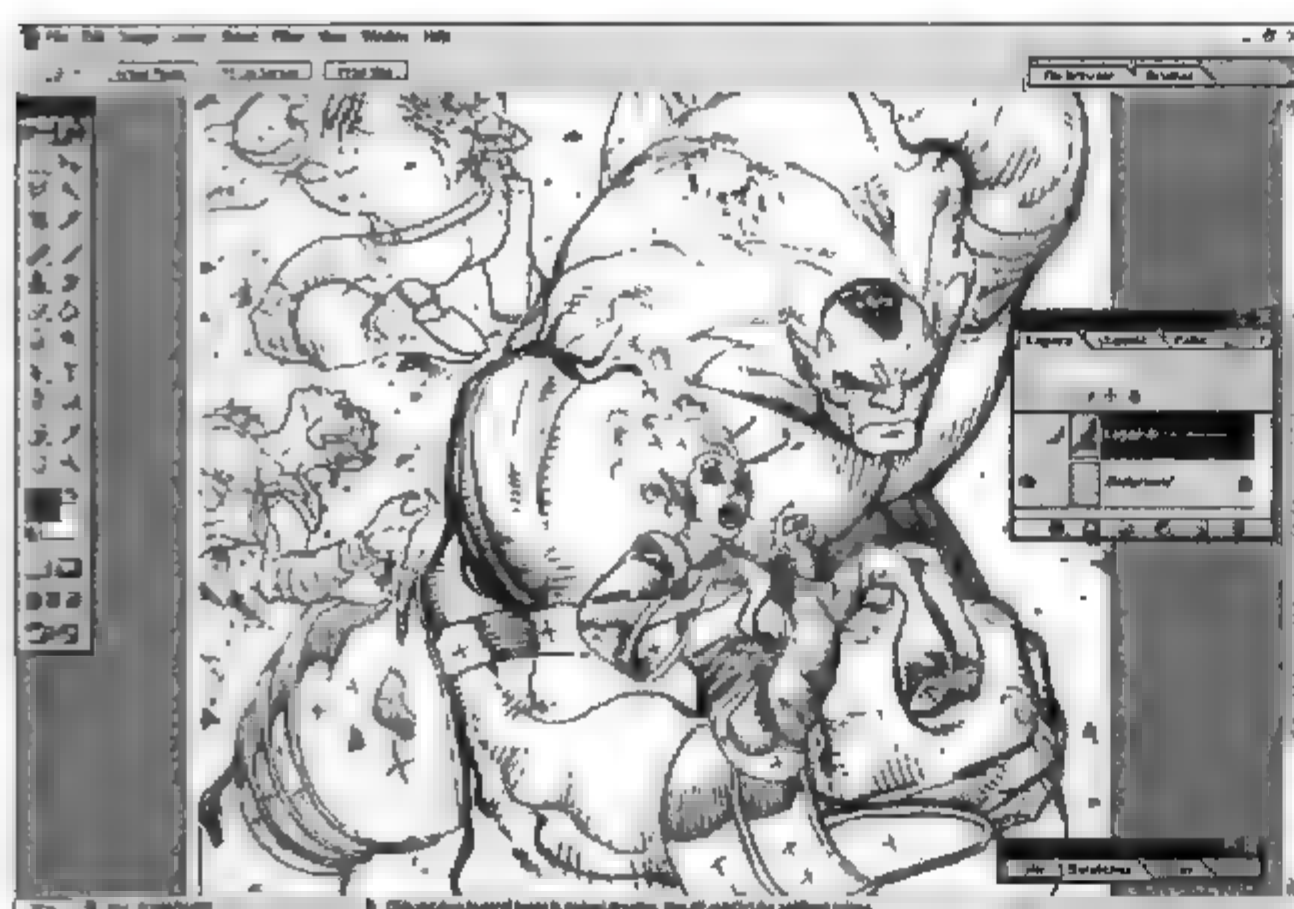
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Aaron Hübrich

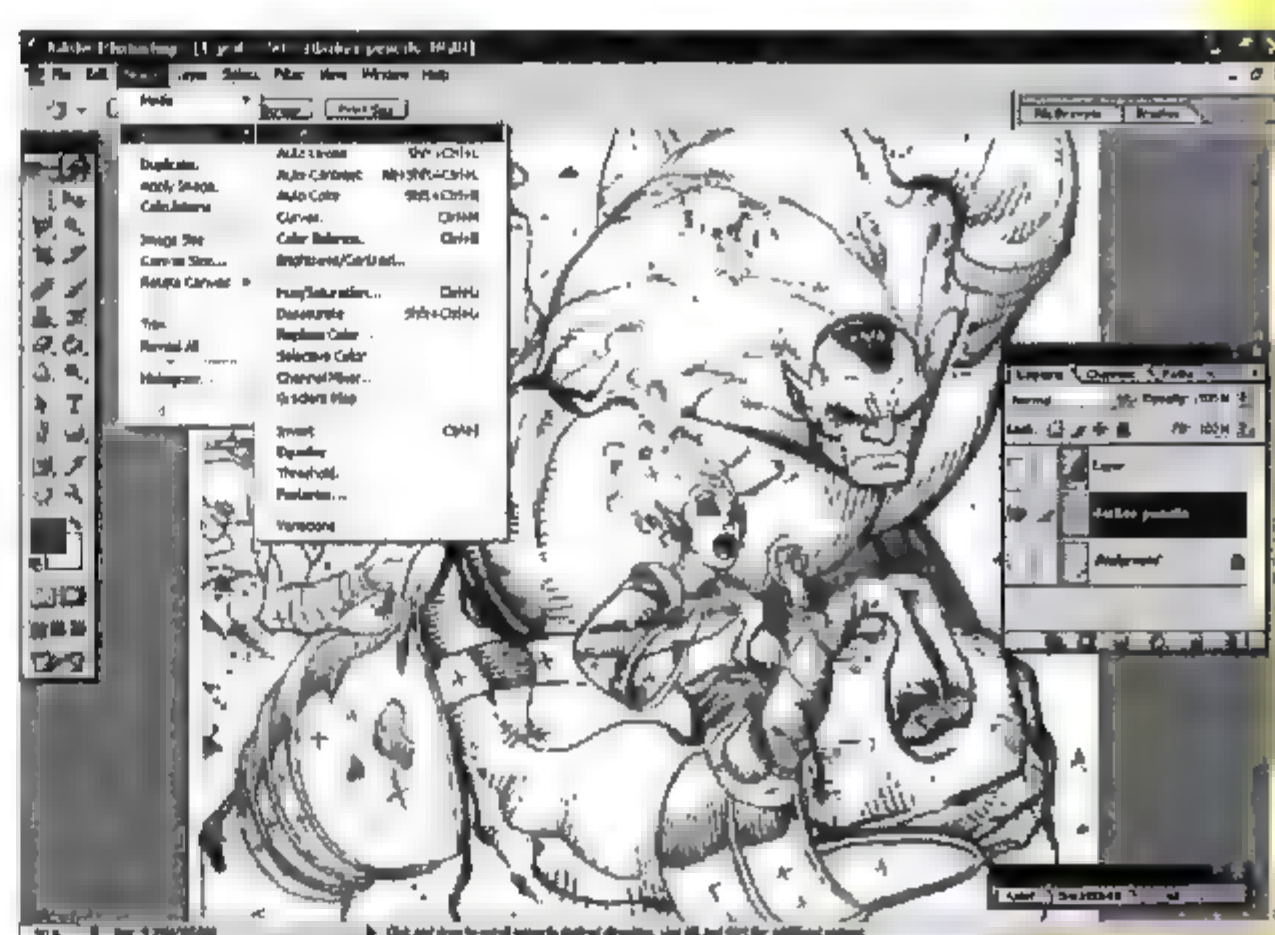
DIGITAL COLORS

Quick Colors Over Pencils Using Photoshop

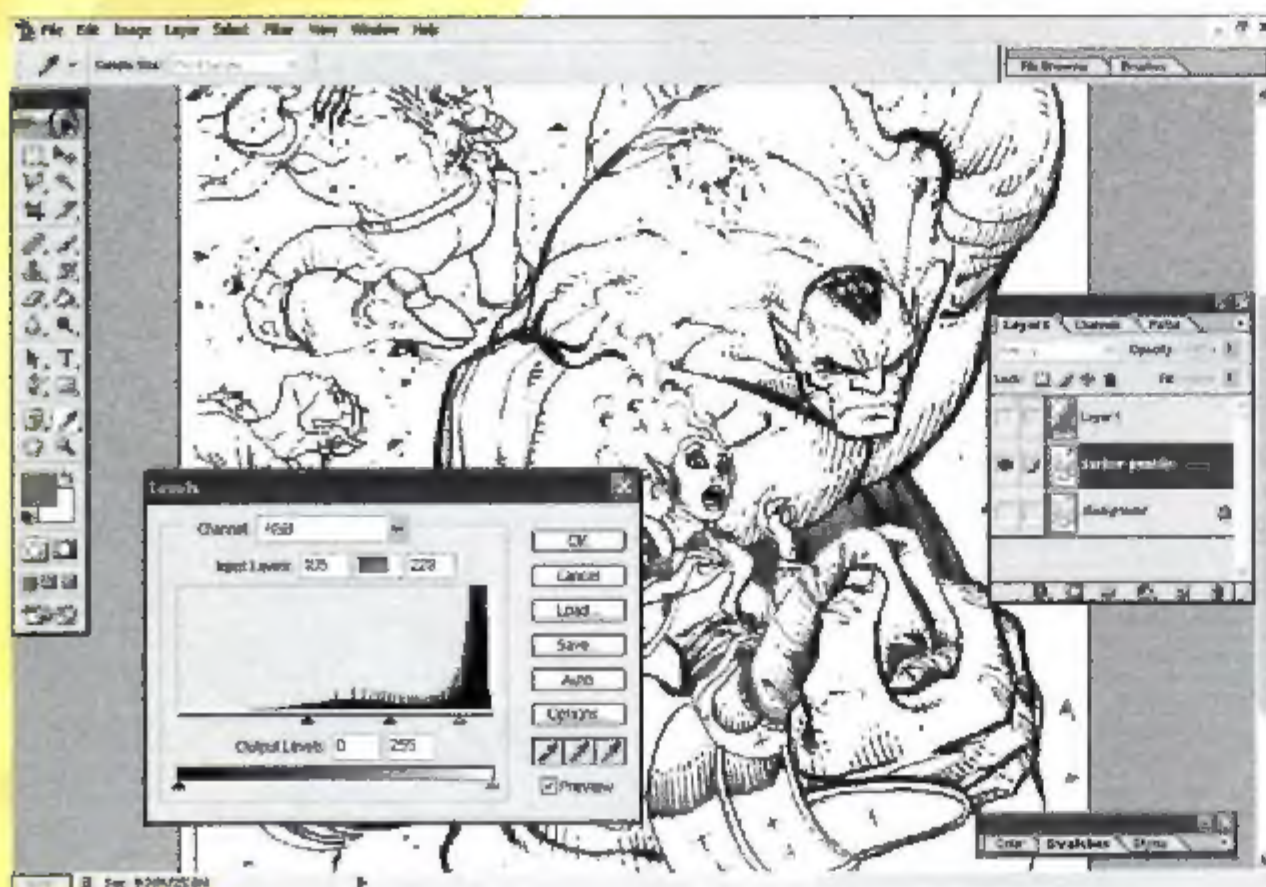
Sometimes you just want it now. Trust me...I understand. Times when you get that nice line art from the penciler and you just want to slap some color on it right away. I know the feeling, and I have some tips on how to make those pencils look pretty darn close to finished inks.



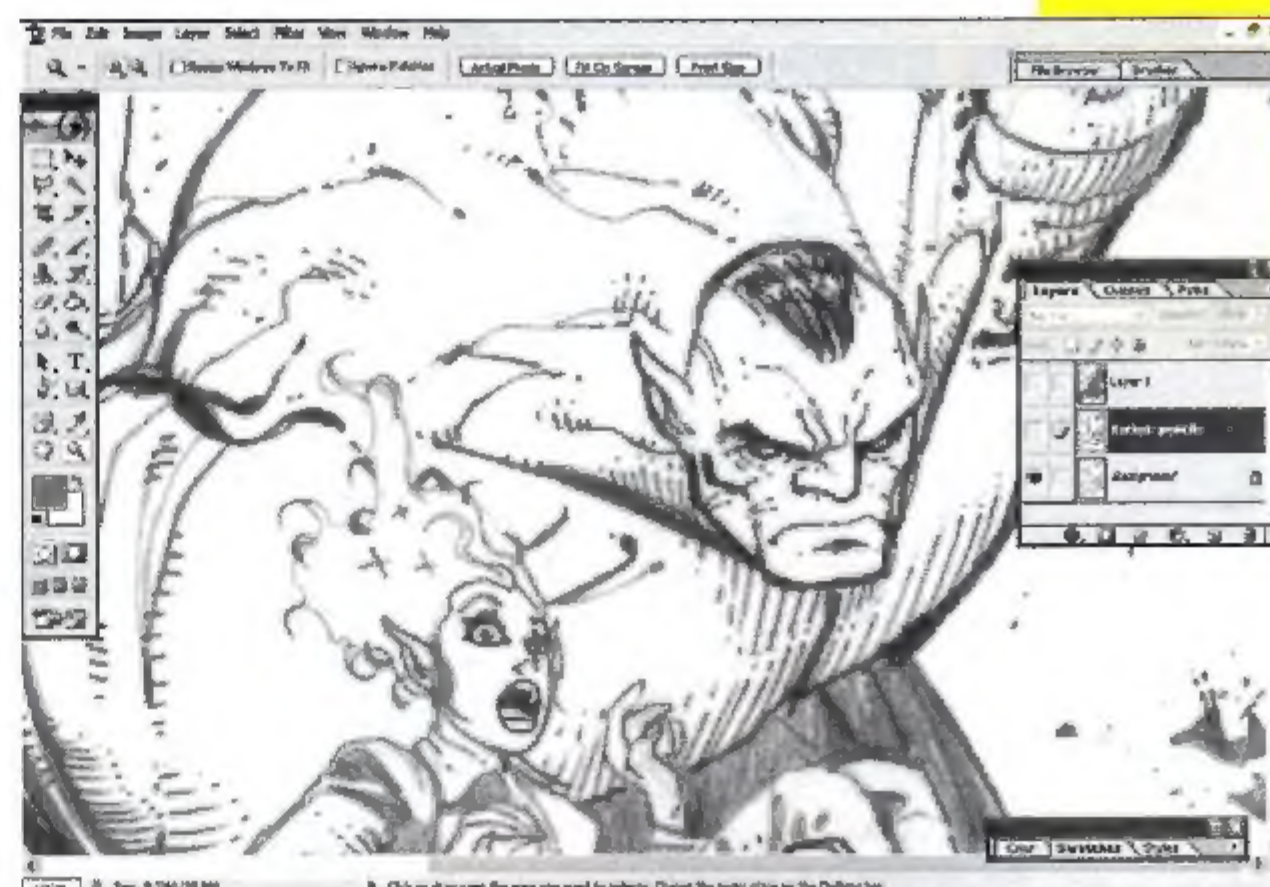
Before we begin, I will put forth this little disclaimer. Putting this kind of piece in your portfolio is a judgement call. Some editors may frown upon any colorist using only penciled pages as a piece to color. Others may look at it as an "out of the box" solution to a problem. Either way, try to know your audience before showing any of these types of pieces in public.



First of all, you want to start out with a decent scan of your work. I won't bore you with a lot of details, but you want to make sure that you scan these pencils in as grayscale or full color at 300 dpi. I work at 11" x 17" in the RGB color mode, but you can work smaller and also in the CMYK mode if you want. It just all depends on your preferences and how quick your computer is.



Once you have your pencils scanned and in to Photoshop, go ahead and copy the background layer (layer/duplicate layer). Name it "darker pencils," or something similar. This way you can always go back in case you royally mess up.



Now I go in and adjust the levels to my satisfaction (image/adjustments/levels). Make sure you are working on the "darker pencils" layer only. By adjusting the levels, it allows you to emulate an inked page of pencils. It's far from replacing an inker, but it gives a colorist an idea of how the final page might look. Using the eraser tool, you can go in and really clean up the background noise if you want to use this as a final piece.



Next is creating another layer to actually color on. Go to layer/new. Set the layer blend mode to "multiply." Now you won't color over those cool pencils. Go ahead and color away, applying all your base tones, but keep in mind that you can only go darker on the multiply setting. You can get around that by...you guessed it...adding another layer! Just make sure this layer blend mode is set to "screen." The screen mode lets you color lighter and lighter each time you go over an area. These modes take a little getting used to, but in the end will save lots of time.

Enjoy working over your pencils!
Aaron



CONTRIBUTORS



Bob Hickey

Along with his duties as publisher of Sketch Magazine, he is the creative force behind Blood & Roses, StormQuest, and Tempered Steele. He currently has a new Blood and Roses project in the works along with his new creator owned series Race Danger, both will be appearing at BLP Comics.

Bob is one of the co-founders of Blue Line Productions. He can be reached at bobh@bluelinepro.com www.bluelinepro.com



Beau Smith

Beau has been writing comics, columns, and video games for fifteen years. His past comic credits include Guy Gardner: Warrior, Batman/Wildcat, Star Wars, The Tenth, Wolverine vs. Shi, and many more. His creator owned projects are Parts Unknown, Wynonna Earp, and The BadLander. Smith's future projects include Maximum Jack, 200 People To Kill, Wynonna Earp, and Cossack, as well as the Maximo II video game from Capcom. Smith is currently the Vice President of Sales and Marketing for IDW Publishing.

Flint Henry

WizKids/Mage Knight, Ral Partha, and other companies utilize the fantastical concepts pulsating from his Nyarlathoepian pencil point – icing on the appendage after more than a decade of delineating disturbed, dark, and violent characters such as Grimjack, Lawdog, Manbat, and the occasional demonic Batman.



Tom Bierbaum

Tom, with wife Mary, has scripted such comics as Legion of Super-Heroes and The Heckler for DC Comics, Xena and Return to Jurassic Park for Topps Comics, Star for Image Comics and Dead Kid Adventures, a creator owned project by Knight Press.



Chuck Dixon

From the exoticism of oriental action-fest Way of the Rat to the starlit stellar settings of Sigil to the crushed bone Celtic boglands of Brath, every corner of the CrossGen comics universe is deftly charted by Chuck Dixon from the mighty decks of El Cazador, and filled with all the character-driven drama and diversity for which he is so well recognized and sought after.



Aaron Hübrich

Aaron was going to be the next great fantasy painter, but something caught his eye in college - comics! From then on he never looked back, focusing on making an impact on the comic book industry. In the 90's he learned a lot by self publishing, and working for several larger publishers. A few years ago he became interested in digital coloring, and is now contributing his skills to major publishers. Aaron has authored a book showing the "step by step" process on how to make comic books come to life using Photoshop. If you were ever interested in how to color for comics, then you really need to check out this book!

Mitch Byrd

Mitch's pencils have wowed everyone, from the sci-fi super-hero Guy Gardner crowd to the extreme-evisceration indulgers of Verotik comics. Enjoy his attractive, lighthearted art with our Sketch exclusives.



Bill Love

Bill is a longtime comics fan who is currently involved in a massive project, translating the entire works of Brian Michael Bendis into Russian. The fact that Bill knows no Russian has lead to serious delays in the project. No authenticated photographs are known to exist.

Heeeeeeey, Pros! Whether you're working wildly in today's multi-faceted market...or haven't ruled a panel border for twenty years but find yourself still interested in the medium... Like what you see in *Sketch* and want to be a part of it? Disappointed in *Sketch* and want to show us how it's done? Whether currently active or just waiting for that big comeback, if you want to have some fun and help out the comic book creative community ("Won't somebody think of the children?!"), we'd love to hear from you. Don't fail to drop us a line at sketch@bluelinepro.com and have that PR shot at the ready. If you have the voice, we have the vehicle...Wheels On Fire!!

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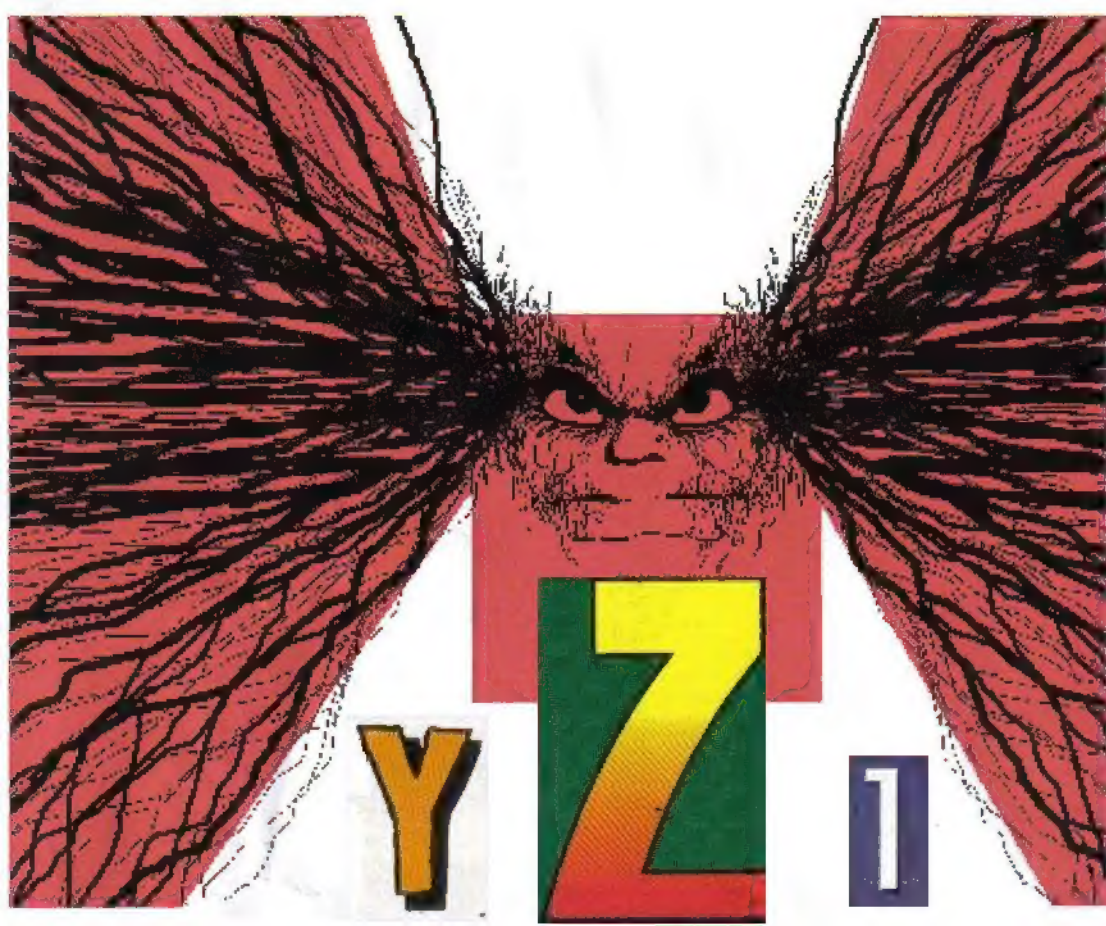
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